

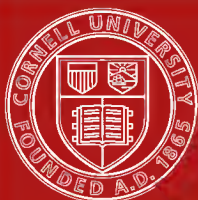
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WASHINGTON'S LAST FAREWELL TO HIS MOTHER

On leaving for New York to be first President. (Page 208.)

The Story-Life of Washington

A Life-History in Five Hundred True Stories,
Selected from Original Sources and
Fitted Together in Order

BY
WAYNE WHIPPLE

Author of
"The Story-Life of Lincoln,"
Etc.

With Reproductions of Paintings, Engravings and Manuscripts



VOLUME II



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Philadelphia

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CHAPTER XIX

GENERAL GATES AND BURGOYNE'S SURRENDER

A Double Feint

Just before sailing from New York Howe sent a letter to Burgoyne which he carefully arranged should fall into the hands of Washington, for he gave it to be carried by a patriot prisoner whom he released and paid a handsome sum of money, as if he really believed that such a person would prove a faithful messenger. In this letter he said that he was making a feint at sea to the southward, but that his real intention was to sail to Boston, and from there assist Burgoyne at Albany.

This letter was itself a feint; Howe's ships disappeared in the hot July haze that overhung the ocean, and for a week nothing more was heard of him. A Connecticut newspaper printed an advertisement offering a reward for a lost general.

The True History of the American Revolution Sydney George Fisher, p. 335.

Outnumbered, Beaten, and Caught, Burgoyne Surrenders

Whatever his feelings may have been in regard to the command of the northern department, Washington made no change in his own course after Gates had been appointed. He knew that Gates was at least harmless, and not likely to block the natural course of events. He therefore felt free to press his own policy without cessation, and without apprehension. He took care that Lincoln and Arnold should be there to look after the New England militia, and he wrote to Governor Clinton, in whose energy and courage he had great confidence, to rouse up the men of New York. He suggested the points of attack, and at every moment

advised and counseled and watched, holding all the while a firm grip on Howe. Slowly and surely the net, thus painfully set, tightened around Burgoyne. The New Englanders whipped one division at Bennington, and the New Yorkers shattered another at Oriskany and Fort Schuyler. The country people turned out in defense of their invaded homes and poured into the American camp. Burgoyne struggled and advanced, fought and retreated. Gates, stupid, lethargic, and good-natured, did nothing, but there was no need of generalship; and Arnold was there, turbulent and quarrelsome, but full of daring; and Morgan, too, equally ready; and they and others did all the necessary fighting.

Poor Burgoyne, a brave gentleman, if not a great general, had the misfortune to be a clever man in the service of a stupid administration, and he met the fate usually meted out under such circumstances to men of ideas. Howe went off to the conquest of Philadelphia, Clinton made a brief burning and plundering raid up the river, and the northern invasion, which really had meaning, was left to its fate. It was a hard fate, but there was no escape. Out-numbered, beaten, and caught, Burgoyne surrendered. If there had been a fighting man at the head of the American army, the British would have surrendered as prisoners of war, and not on conditions. Schuyler, we may be sure, whatever his failings, would never have let them off so easily. But it was sufficient as it was. The wilderness, and the militia of New York and New England swarming to the defense of their homes, had done the work. It all fell out just as Washington had foreseen and planned, and England, despising her enemy and their commander, saw one of her armies surrender, and might have known, if she had had the wit, that the colonies were now lost forever. The Revolution had been saved at Trenton; it was established at Saratoga. In one case it was the direct, in the other the indirect, work of Washington.



Engraved from the Painting by John Trumbull.

A FAMOUS PORTRAIT OF WASHINGTON

Could Not Avoid Being a Gentleman

While the two armies were making faces at each other from works only a musket-shot apart, Sir Henry Clinton ascended the Hudson from New York, outwitted Putnam, and captured the three forts near Peekskill that constituted the defenses of the river. Putnam intercepted a dispatch from Clinton to Burgoyne announcing his success and approach. Had this word reached Burgoyne, that officer would never have capitulated. Rome was once saved by geese; in the autumn of 1777 America was saved by an emetic, for the intercepted dispatch was obtained from the stomach of a spy, who had swallowed it, by a dose of medicine appropriate to the occasion.

Two days before the interception of this dispatch Burgoyne again moved to the attack. He found his match, for Gates, although an unscrupulous scoundrel, was an able soldier. Burgoyne's right was turned, and Arnold, dashing to the field alone in spite of Gates's efforts to prevent him, assumed command in front of the enemy's center and broke it. Burgoyne, repulsed and attempting to retreat, found himself in a day or two surrounded on all sides but one, toward which he dared not move, and he had provisions for only three days, so he summoned his officers to talk about a surrender. Their deliberations were materially hastened by an American cannon-shot that swept across the table around which they were seated.

Extorting honorable terms from Gates, Burgoyne surrendered at Saratoga on the 17th of October, the gain to the Americans, besides glory and prisoners, being a most desirable assortment of artillery, muskets, ammunition, and military stores. The most astonishing fact connected with the affair, however, was, that Gates behaved like a gentleman to those in his power; which was of rare occurrence in his American career. Even in this respect he was cast in the shade by Schuyler, who made his house in Albany

Burgoyne's home, although a few days before the surrender Burgoyne had completely destroyed Schuyler's beautiful home on the west bank of the Hudson.

Washington learned of the defeat of Burgoyne by hearsay; Gates seemed to think that the commander-in-chief of the army was not of importance enough to merit a special dispatch, so he reported only to Congress. This discourtesy did not prevent Washington's writing to Gates: "I do myself the pleasure to congratulate you on the signal success of the army under your command," and declaring the victory "an event that does the highest honor to the American arms." Instead of calling his lieutenant sharply to account for not reporting in proper form, he merely said, "I can not but regret that a matter of such magnitude, and so interesting to our general operations, should have reached me by report only, or through the channel of letters not bearing that authenticity which the importance of it required, and which it would have received by a line under your signature stating the simple fact."

If the commander-in-chief imagined that Gates would be affected to decency by such language, he was a very bad judge of human nature; the only effect of the letter was to prove that, even under extreme provocation and insult, Washington could not avoid being a gentleman.

George Washington, John Habberton, p. 158.

An Event of Infinite Importance

The surrender of Burgoyne and his army was an event of infinite importance to the republican cause beyond its immediate results. Hitherto, during the war, the preponderance of successes had been on the side of the British; and there were doubtful minds and trembling hearts everywhere among the true friends of the cause, to whom the idea of deliverance of the colonists appeared almost chimerical.

The events on the Brandywine were not calculated to

inspire hope, even in the most hopeful; and all eyes were turned anxiously to the army of the North. Every breath of rumor from Saratoga was listened to with eagerness; and when the victory was certified, a shout went up all over the land—from the furrow, and workshops, and marts of commerce, from the pulpit, from provincial halls of legislation, from partisan camps, and from the shattered ranks of the commander-in-chief of the American armies, at White-marsh. The bills of Congress rose twenty per cent. in value; capital came forth from its hiding-places; the militia of the country were inspirited, and more hopeful hearts everywhere prevailed.

The Congress, overjoyed by the event, forgot their own dignity; and when Major Wilkinson, Gates' bearer of despatches to that body, appeared at their door, he was admitted to the legislative floor, and allowed verbally to proclaim in the ear of that august assembly.

"The whole British army have laid down their arms at Saratoga; our own, full of vigor and courage, expect your orders; it is for your wisdom to decide where the country may still have need of their services."

In the ecstasy of the hour the commander-in-chief was overlooked and almost forgotten; and the insult of the elated Gates, in omitting to send his despatches to his chief was allowed to pass unrebuked.

Beyond the Atlantic the effect of this victory was also very important. In the British Parliament it gave strength to the opposition, and struck the ministerial party with dismay. "You may swell every expense and every effort, still more extravagantly," thundered Chatham, as he leaned upon his crutches and poured forth a torrent of eloquent invective and denunciation. "You may pile and accumulate every assistance you can buy or borrow; traffic and barter with every little pitiful German prince that sells and sends his subjects to the shambles of a foreign power; your efforts are forever vain and impotent; doubly

so from this mercenary aid on which you rely, for it irritates to an incurable resentment the minds of your enemies. To overrun with the mercenary sons of rapine and plunder, devoting them and their possessions to the rapacity of hireling cruelty!" . . .

By this victory, unaided as the republicans were by any foreign help or encouragement of much importance, their prowess was placed in the most favorable light before the eyes of continental Europe. France now listened with respect to the overtures for aid made by the American commissioners. Spain, the states general of Holland, the prince of Orange, Catherine of Russia, and even Ganganeli (Pope Clement the Fourteenth), all of whom feared and hated England because of her increasing puissance in arms, commerce, and diplomacy, thought and spoke kindly of the struggling Americans. And on the sixth of February following, France acknowledged the independence of the United States, and entered into a treaty of friendship and commerce, and an alliance offensive and defensive, with them.

Washington and the American Republic Benson J. Lossing, Vol. II, p. 539.

A Letter about Germantown and Burgoyne

(To John Augustine Washington.)

“Philadelphia County, 18 October, 1777.

“DEAR BROTHER,

“Your kind and affectionate Letters of the 21st of Sept. & 2d Inst. came safe to hand.

“When my last to you was dated I know not; for truly I can say, that my whole time is so much engrossed, that I have scarcely a moment, but sleeping ones for relaxation, or to indulge myself in writing a friend. The anxiety you have been under, on acct. of this army, I can easily conceive. Would to God there had been less cause for it; or that our

situation at present was such as to promise much from it.

“But for a thick Fog, which rendered it so infinitely dark at times as not to distinguish friend from Foe at the distance of thirty yards, we should, I believe, have made a decisive and glorious day of it. But Providence or some unaccountable something designed it otherwise; for after we had driven the Enemy a mile or two, after they were in the utmost confusion and flying before us in most places, after we were upon the point, (as it appeared to every body,) of grasping a compleat victory, our own troops took fright and fled with precipitation and disorder. How to acct for this I know not; unless, as I before observed, the Fog represented their own Friends to them for a Reinforcement of the Enemy, as we attacked in different Quarters at the same time, and were about closing the wings of our army when this happened. One thing, indeed, contributed not a little to our misfortune, and that was want of ammunition on the right wing, which began the Engagement, and in the course of two hours and forty minutes, which time it lasted, had, (many of them) expended the forty Rounds, that they took into the Field. After the Engagement we removed to a place about twenty miles from the Enemy, to collect our Forces together, to take care of our wounded, get furnished with necessaries again, and be in a better posture, either for offensive or defensive operations. We are now advancing towards the Enemy again, being at this time within twelve miles of them.

“Our loss in the late action was, in killed, wounded, and missing, about one thousand men, but of the missing, many, I dare say, took advantage of the times, and deserted.

This we certainly know, that the Hospital at Philadelphia & several large Meeting Houses, are filled with the wounded besides private Houses with the Horses. In a word it was a bloody day. Would to Heaven I could add, that it had been a more fortunate one for us.

“Our distress on acct. of Cloathing is great, and in a little

time must be very sensibly felt, unless some expedient can be hit upon to obtain them.

"I very sincerely congratulate you on the change in your Family. Tell the young couple, after wishing them joy of their union, that it is my sincere hope, that it will be as happy and lasting as their present joys are boundless. The Enclosed Letter of thanks to my sister for her elegant present you will please to deliver; and, with sincere affection for you all, I am &c.

"P. S. I had scarce finished this Letter when by express from the State of New York I received the Important and glorious news which follows:—

" 'Albany 18th Octr., 1777.

" 'Last night at 8 o'clock the capitulation whereby General Burgoyne & whole Army surrendered themselves Prisoners of War, was signed and this Morning they have to march out towds. the River above Fish Creek with the Honours of War (and there ground their Arms) they are from thence to be marched to Massachusetts bay.

" 'We congratulate you on this happy event, & remain &c.

" 'GEO. CLINTON.'

"I most devoutly congratulate you, my country, and every well wisher to the cause on this signal stroke of Providence. Yrs. as before,"

[GEORGE.]

Writings of Washington, Edited by Lawrence B. Evans, Ph.D., p. 92.

"My Tender-hearted Hyenas, Go Forth!"

Even had the loyalist feeling on the Vermont frontier of New York been far stronger than it really was, Burgoyne had done much to alienate or stifle it by his ill-advised

employment of Indian auxiliaries. For this blunder the responsibility rests mainly with Lord North and Lord George Germaine. . . . The slaughter of aged men, of women and children and unresisting prisoners, was absolutely prohibited; and "on no account, or pretense, or subtlety, or prevarication," were scalps to be taken from wounded or dying men. An order more likely to prove efficient was one which provided a reward for every savage who should bring his prisoners to camp in safety. To these injunctions, which must have inspired them with pitying contempt, the chiefs laconically replied that they had "sharpened their hatchets upon their affections," and were ready to follow their "great white father."

The employment of savage auxiliaries was indignantly denounced by the opposition in Parliament, and when the news of this speech of Burgoyne's reached England it was angrily ridiculed by Burke, who took a sounder view of the natural instincts of the red man. "Suppose," said Burke, "that there was a riot on Tower Hill. What would the keeper of his majesty's lions do? Would he not fling open the dens of the wild beasts, and address them thus? 'My gentle lions, my humane bears, my tender-hearted hyenas, go forth! But I exhort you, as you are Christians and members of civilized society, to take care not to hurt any man, woman or child!'" The House of Commons was convulsed over this grotesque picture; and Lord North, to whom it seemed irresistibly funny to hear an absent man thus denounced for measures he himself had originated, sat choking with laughter, while tears ran down his great fat cheeks.

The American Revolution, John Fiske Vol. I, p. 275.

With Washington at White Marsh

Early in the succeeding spring, say 1777, the States were called upon by Congress for a quota of militia, as the

British fleet with their army left New York, their supposed destination being the Delaware or Chesapeake Bay. They soon entered the latter and proceeded up to its head (where I had a full view of the ships at anchor) and landed the army near the head of Elk and proceeded by slow marches. They were met by our gallant little army, much inferior [in numbers] at different points, and were annoyed, as occasion offered, but [as it was] impossible to check them successfully, they soon took possession of this city. [Philadelphia.]

General Washington chose White Marsh, eighteen miles distant, for his headquarters. It was my fortune once more to take the field, being then an ensign in a company of militia (commanded by my brother). [I was] ordered out and marched with the company to join the army at White Marsh, soon after the battle of Germantown. I was often in scouting parties, and on one occasion came down in the night with four hundred men under the command of a colonel within three miles of the city—almost near enough to hear the British sentinels (their line extending from the river Delaware to the Schuylkill, two miles north of the city, on the Germantown road), making a march, during the night, of twenty-five miles by computation, from headquarters, down through Jenkintown, and back to headquarters. The object of the expedition was to intercept British officers, who, it was said, frequently sallied out at night to regale themselves in the country. We were disappointed, however, in our expectations, but a report of the expedition made them shy of such experiments. After the campaign closed the militia were discharged and returned to their homes as before. This cured me of a soldier's life, being sick the greater part of the winter. I might observe that I was as well entitled to a pension as other soldiers and officers, but as I never claimed a pension, nor did I ever intend to do so, though often advised, I did not consider it an object, or worthy of notice,

or of the trouble it might require. I freely renounced all claim, and my country was welcome to my services, whatever they might have been worth.

Reminiscences, in manuscript, of Cornelius Comegys, through the courtesy of his great-grandson, G. Albert Smyth.

Pennsylvania Remonstrates against Going into Winter Quarters

"It's a very pleasing circumstance to the division under my command," writes Varnum, "that there is a probability of their marching; three days successively we have been destitute of bread. Two days we have been entirely without meat. The men must be supplied or they cannot be commanded."

In fact, a dangerous mutiny had broken out among the famishing troops in the preceding night, which their officers had had great difficulty in quelling.

Washington instantly wrote to the President of Congress on the subject. "I do not know from what cause this alarming deficiency, or rather total failure of supplies arises; but unless more vigorous exertions and better regulations take place in that line (the commissaries' department) immediately, the army must dissolve. I have done all in my power by remonstrating, by writing, by ordering the commissaries on this head, from time to time; but without any good effect, or obtaining more than a present scanty relief. Owing to this, the march of the army has been delayed on more than one interesting occasion, in the course of the present campaign; and had a body of the enemy crossed the Schuylkill this morning, as I had reason to expect, the divisions which I ordered to be in readiness to march and meet them could not have moved."

Scarce had Washington despatched this letter, when he learnt that the Legislature of Pennsylvania had addressed a remonstrance to Congress against his going into winter quarters, instead of keeping in the open field. This letter, received in his forlorn situation, surrounded by an unhoused,

scantily clad, half-starved army, shivering in the midst of December's snow and cold, put an end to his forbearance, and drew from him another letter to the President of Congress, dated on the 23d, which . . . gives the difficulties of the situation, mainly caused by unwise and intermeddling legislation.

Life of George Washington Washington Irving, Vol. III, p. 387.

American victory at Princeton	Jan. 3, 1777
Winter quarters at Morristown	1777
Lafayette's first meeting with Washington	August, 1777
British victorious at Chad's Ford, Brandywine Creek,	
	Sept. 17, 1777
British victory at Germantown	Oct. 4, 1777
Burgoyne surrenders to Gates at Saratoga	Oct. 17, 1777
Washington encamps at Valley Forge	Dec. 11, 1777

CHAPTER XX

"THE LONG AND DREARY WINTER" AT VALLEY FORGE

The State of Affairs That Winter

There was no town at Valley Forge, and it became necessary to provide some shelter for the soldiers other than the canvas tents which served in the field in summer. It was the middle of December when the army began preparations for the winter, and Washington gave directions for the building of the little village. The men were divided into parties of twelve, each party to build a hut to accommodate that number; and in order to stimulate the men, Washington promised a reward of twelve dollars to the party in each regiment which finished its hut first and most satisfactorily. And as there was some difficulty in getting boards, he offered a hundred dollars to any officer or soldier who should invent some substitute which would be as cheap as boards and as quickly provided.

Each hut was to be fourteen feet by sixteen, the sides, ends, and roof to be made of logs, and the sides made tight with clay. There was to be a fireplace in the rear of each hut, built of wood, but lined with clay eighteen inches thick. The walls were to be six and a half feet high. Huts were also to be provided for the officers, and to be placed in the rear of those occupied by the troops. All these were to be regularly arranged in streets. A visitor to the camp when the huts were being built wrote of the army: "They appear to me like a family of beavers, every one busy; some carrying logs, others mud, and the rest plastering them together." It was bitterly cold, and for a month the men were at work, making ready for the winter.

But in what sort of condition were the men themselves

when they began this work? Here is a picture of one of those men on his way to Valley Forge: "His bare feet peep through his worn-out shoes, his legs nearly naked from the tattered remains of an only pair of stockings, his breeches not enough to cover his nakedness, his shirt hanging in strings, his hair disheveled, his face wan and thin, his look hungry, his whole appearance that of a man forsaken and neglected." And the snow was falling. This was one of the privates. The officers were scarcely better off. One was wrapped "in a sort of dressing-gown made of an old blanket or woolen bed-cover." The uniforms were torn and ragged; the guns were rusty; a few only had bayonets; the soldiers carried their powder in tin boxes and cow-horns.

To explain why this army was so poor and forlorn would be to tell a long story. It may be summed up briefly in these words: The army was not taken care of because there was no country to take care of it. There were thirteen States, and each of these States sent troops into the field, but all the States were jealous of one another. There was a Congress, which undertook to direct the war, but all the members of Congress coming from the several States were jealous of one another. They were agreed on only one thing—that it was not prudent to give the army too much power. It is true that they had once given Washington large authority, but they had given it only for a short period. They were very much afraid that somehow the army would rule the country, and yet they were trying to free the country from the rule of England. But when they talked about freeing the country, each man thought only of his own State. The first fervor with which they had talked about a common country had died away; there were some very selfish men in Congress, who could not be patriotic enough to think of the whole country.

The truth is, it takes a long time for the people of a country to feel that they have a country. Up to the time of the war for independence, the people in America did

not care much for one another or for America. They had really been preparing to be a nation, but they did not know it. They were angry with Great Britain, and they knew they had been wronged. They were therefore ready to fight; but it does not require so much courage to fight as to endure suffering and to be patient.

George Washington, an Historical Biography, Horace E. Scudder, p. 171.

How They Kept the Sentry Warm

When Washington realized this he determined not to rely on Congress any longer, and, taking matters into his own hands, he proceeded to fight famine and cold as vigorously as he had fought the enemy. His experience as a planter now stood him in good stead, for he had had to build houses and mills, and provide for a large number of laborers in his farming days, and the knowledge he had gained in this way enabled him to make Valley Forge a habitable, if not a comfortable, encampment. Under his directions log huts were erected, prizes being offered those soldiers who built the best and neatest shelters; streets were planned and laid out, and most important of all, General Greene was persuaded to serve as Quartermaster-general and procure the necessary food and clothing.

Greene was essentially a fighting general, and the idea of abandoning all chance of glory and distinction in the field and undertaking the dull work of seeing that the troops had something to eat and wear was hateful to him. "History never heard of a Quartermaster-general!" he exclaimed in disgust, but he unselfishly laid aside his own wishes and, taking up his disagreeable duties, performed them so well that if history never heard of a Quartermaster-general before his day, it has remembered one ever since. Under his energetic management the country was scoured for provisions, all the available material for blankets and clothing was procured, and after weeks of desperate work the most pressing needs of the troops were met.

But despite his utmost exertions Washington was forced to witness frightful sufferings among his men. There were no proper accommodations for the wounded, and starvation and exposure soon caused diseases that killed strong men by the score and spread illness throughout his camp, until at times there were scarcely enough men fit for duty to guard the breastworks. Nevertheless, the resolute commander struggled to keep his forces together, sharing all their hardships and devoting himself night and day to bettering their condition. Inspired by his splendid courage and example, the soldiers bore their privations almost without murmuring, each occupant of a hut contributing part of his clothing whenever one of his "bunkies" was ordered on sentry duty, and otherwise showing an unselfishness rarely equaled in the history of war. During all that cruel winter when the huts lay almost buried in snow, and the ragged sentries often froze to death at their posts, and each day was a living death, there were practically no desertions among the native-born Americans, and comparatively few of those who were born elsewhere yielded to the temptation of seeking comfort with the enemy. No military chieftain ever received a finer tribute than this.

On the Trail of Washington, Frederick Trevor Hill, p. 172.

Thanking "Light-horse Harry"

On one occasion there was a flurry at the most advanced post, where Captain Henry Lee ("Light-horse Harry") with a few of his troops was stationed. He had made himself very formidable to the enemy by harassing their foraging parties. An attempt was made to surprise him. A party of about two hundred dragoons, taking a circuitous route in the night, came upon him by daybreak. He had but a few men with him at the time, and took post in a large storehouse. His scanty force did not allow a soldier for each window. The dragoons attempted to force their way into the house. There was a warm contest. The dragoons were

bravely repulsed, and sheered off, leaving two killed and four wounded. "So well directed was the opposition," writes Lee to Washington, "that we drove them from the stables, and saved every horse. We have got the arms, some cloaks, etc., of their wounded. The enterprise was certainly daring, though the issue of it was very ignominious. I had not a soldier for each window."

Washington, whose heart evidently warmed more and more to this young Virginian officer, the son of his "lowland beauty," not content with noticing his exploit in general orders, wrote a note to him on the subject, expressed with unusual familiarity and warmth.

"My dear Lee," writes he, "although I have given you my thanks in the general orders of this day, for the late instance of your gallant behavior, I cannot resist the inclination I feel to repeat them again in this manner. I needed no fresh proof of your merit to bear you in remembrance. I waited only for the proper time and season to show it; those I hope are not far off.

Offer my sincere thanks to the whole of your gallant party, and assure them, that no one felt pleasure more sensibly, or rejoiced more sincerely for your and their escape, than your affectionate," etc.

[G. WASHINGTON.]

Life of George Washington, Washington Irving, Vol. III, p. 437.

"Who Are You, Anyway?"

During that terribly trying winter at Valley Forge, Washington, in the worst weather, went frequently about the miserable camp by himself, to see how his poor soldiers were faring, and happened late, one bitterly cold afternoon, to come upon "an awkward squad," engaged in building a log hut, under the angry derisive direction of an insolent young lieutenant, lately arrived at winter quarters. After listening for a few moments the General, shocked at such brutality, called out authoritatively, yet quietly:

"Don't abuse your men, lieutenant! Can't you see that they are half frozen?"

Failing to recognize his great superior officer in the tall figure, wrapped in a long military cloak, and standing under a dark pine, in the snowy twilight, the young subaltern shouted back—"Mind your blanked business! Who are *you* anyhow?"

Then the tall figure under the pine grew yet taller, and like a thunder-burst came the answer:

"I am General George Washington, commander-in-chief of the Continental armies, . . . and I order you under arrest."

Stories and Sketches, Grace Greenwood, p. 18.

The Kind of Man He Really Was

Abler pens than mine have put on record the sorrowful glory of that dreadful camp-ground by Valley Forge. It is strongly characterized in those beseeching letters and despatches of the almost heart-broken man, who poured out his grief in language which even today no man can read unmoved. To us he showed only a gravely tranquil face, which had in it something which reassured those starving and naked ones. Most wonderful is it, as I read what he wrote to inefficient, blundering men, to see how calmly he states our pitiful case, how entirely he controls a nature violent and passionate beyond that of most men. He was scarcely in the saddle as commander before the body which set him there was filled with dissatisfaction.

I think it well that we know so little of what went on within the walls of Congress. The silence of history has been friendly to many reputations. There need be no silence as to this man, nor any concealment, and there has been much. I would have men see him as we saw him in his anger, when no language was too strong; in his hour of serene kindness, when Hamilton, the aide of twenty, was "my boy," in this starving camp, with naked men shivering



FIRST MEETING OF WASHINGTON WITH HAMILTON

in their blankets by the fires, when "He pitied those miseries he could neither relieve nor prevent." Am I displeased to think that although he laughed rarely he liked Colonel Scammell's strong stories, and would be amused by a song such as no woman should hear?

This serene, inflexible, decisive man, biding his hour, could be then the venturesome soldier, willing to put every fortune on the chance, risking himself with a courage that alarmed men for his life. Does any but a fool think that he could have been all these things and not have had in him the wild blood of passion? He had a love for fine clothes and show. He was, I fear, at times extravagant, and as I have heard, could not pay his doctor's bill, and would postpone that, and send him a horse and a little money to educate his godson, the good doctor's son. As to some of his letters, they contain jests not gross, but not quite fit for grave seigniors nor *virginibus puerisque*. There is one to Lafayette I have been shown by the marquis. It is most amusing, but—oh, fie! Was he religious? I do not know. Men say so. He might have been, and yet have had his hours of ungoverned rage, or other forms of human weakness. Like a friend of mine, he was not given to speech concerning his creed.

Hugh Wynne: Free Quaker, S. Weir Mitchell, M.D., LL.D., p. 359.

Not Every Man a Hero at Valley Forge

29 [May, 1778]

Officers	{	Brig. Gen ^l Huntington
for duty		L ^t Col ^o Burr—Major Still
Tomorrow		Brigade Major Seely
		Inspector from 2 ^d Penn ^a Brigade

At a Gen^l. Court Martial, Col^o. Chambers President the 25 instant, Cap^t. Medaras, of the North Carolina Brigade, tried for forgery—after mature deliberation the Court are

of the opinion that Cap^t. Madaras is guilty of the charge exhibited against him but as he could not have been actuated by motives self interested or injurious to Cap^t. Jones, the Gentleman whose name he signed, and as he had before been perfectly acquainted with Cap^t. Jones's sentiments, the Court (thinking his crime, tho' he is yet truly blame-worthy, alleviated by these circumstances) do sentence him to be reprimanded in General Orders.

The Commander in Chief approves the Sentence, and is much concerned to find that an Officer in this Army, should presume to sign a Brother Officer's name without his permission. Cap^t. Medaras is ordered to be released from his arrest.

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ADVERTISEMENT

On the night of the 27th inst. James Barry an Inhabitant was robbed of £160 Cont^l. Money, 13 hard dollars, a diamond ring, silver spoons, buckles gold buttons, a sword, and some valuable men's & women's wearing apparell, & many other articles. Fifty Dollars reward will be given to any person that will discover the robbers, that the Owner may recover his articles. All Officers are desired to order the strictest enquiry to be made that the Villains may be brought to justice, as it is supposed they belong to the Army

30th [May] 1778

Officers for Duty to Morrow

Brigadier Patterson Col^l. Bradley—B: M: Marshall
Inspector from Poor's Brigade

At a Brigade Gen^l. Court Martial May 27th 1778 Lieut Col^l. Cropper, president Cap^t. Hull of the 15th V: Reg^t. tried 1^{stly} being so far Ellivated with Liquor when on the

parade for Exercising, on the 14th Inst. as rendered him incapable in doing his Duty with precision. 2^{dly} for accusing Lieu^t. Sam^l. Beans Jones of not deposing the truth when Called on Both to give Evidence against him on the 18th. Inst. acquitted of the 1st. Charge but found guilty of the 2^d & Sentenced to be Reprimanded by the Commanding Officer of the Brigade in presence of all the Officers therein—Cap^t. Hull is Ordered to be released from his Arrest.—At a Gen^l. Court Martial May 28th 78, Co^l. Chambers President Ensign James Walker of Co.¹ Guests Reg^t. tried 1^{stly} Deserting a Waggon he had in his Charge at the Appearance of one of our Light Horse and loosing his party in his flight. 2^{dly} for telling several falshoods in Relating the Events when Returning to Camp Unanimously found guilty of the Charges Exhibited against him, being breaches of 5th Article 18 Sec^t. of 21st Article 14th Section of the Articles of War, and Sentenced to be Cashiered—The Commander in Chief Approves the Sentence and Orders it to take place Immediatly.

Orderly Book of General George Washington, Kept at Valley Forge, 18 May–11 June, 1778, pp. 17 to 22.

“For This Example of Christian Charity”

One day a Tory, who was well known in the neighborhood, was captured and brought into camp. His name was Michael Wittman, and he was accused of having carried aid and information to the British in Philadelphia. He was taken to West Chester and there tried by court-martial. It was proved that he was a very dangerous man and that he had more than once attempted to do great harm to the American army. He was pronounced guilty of being a spy and sentenced to be hanged.

On the evening of the day before that set for the execution, a strange old man appeared in Valley Forge. He was a small man with long, snow-white hair falling over his shoulders. His face, although full of kindness, was sad-

looking and thoughtful; his eyes, which were bright and sharp, were upon the ground and lifted only when he was speaking.

His name was announced.

"Peter Miller?" said Washington. "Certainly. Show him in at once."

The old man went in.

"General Washington, I have come to ask a great favor of you," he said, in his usual kindly tones.

"I shall be glad to grant you almost anything," said Washington, "for we surely are indebted to you for many favors. Tell me what it is."

"I hear," said Peter, "that Michael Wittman has been found guilty of treason and that he is to be hanged at Turk's Head tomorrow. I have come to ask you to pardon him."

Washington started back, and a cloud came over his face. "That is impossible," he said. "Wittman is a bad man. He has done all in his power to betray us. He has even offered to join the British and aid in destroying us. In these times we dare not be lenient with traitors; and for that reason, I cannot pardon your friend."

"Friend!" cried Peter. "Why, he is no friend of mine. He is my bitterest enemy. He has persecuted me for years. He has even beaten me and spit in my face, knowing full well that I would not strike back. Michael Wittman is no friend of mine."

Washington was puzzled. "And still you wish me to pardon him?" he asked.

"I do," answered Peter. "I ask it of you as a great personal favor."

"Tell me," said Washington, with hesitating voice, "why is it that you thus ask the pardon of your worst enemy?"

"I ask it because Jesus did as much for me," was the old man's brief answer.

Washington turned away and went into another room. Soon he returned with a paper on which was written the pardon of Michael Wittman.

"My dear friend," he said, as he placed it in the old man's hands, "I thank you for this example of Christian charity."

It was a matter of fifteen miles, by the shortest road, from Valley Forge to West Chester, which was then known as Turk's Head, and the road at that time was almost impassable. The evening was already far gone, and Michael Wittman was to be hanged at sunrise in the morning. How was the pardon to reach him in time to save his life? . . .

Old and feeble though he was, he began to run. From the top of the hill a welcome sight appeared. The straggling village of Turk's Head was just before him, and the sun had not yet risen. He saw a commotion in the street; men were hurrying toward the village green; a body of soldiers was already there, drawn up in order beneath a tree.

Summoning all his strength, Peter ran on and soon entered the village. Close to the tree stood Michael Wittman with his hands tied behind him. A strong rope was dangling from one of the branches. In another minute the sun would begin to peep over the snow-clad hills. An officer had already given orders to place the rope around the traitor's neck. Peter Miller, still running, shouted with all his might. The officer heard and paused. The crowd looked around and wondered. Panting and out of breath, Peter came up, waving a paper in his hand.

"A pardon! a pardon!" he gasped. "A pardon from General Washington."

The officer took the paper and read it aloud.

"Unbind the prisoner and let him go," he commanded.

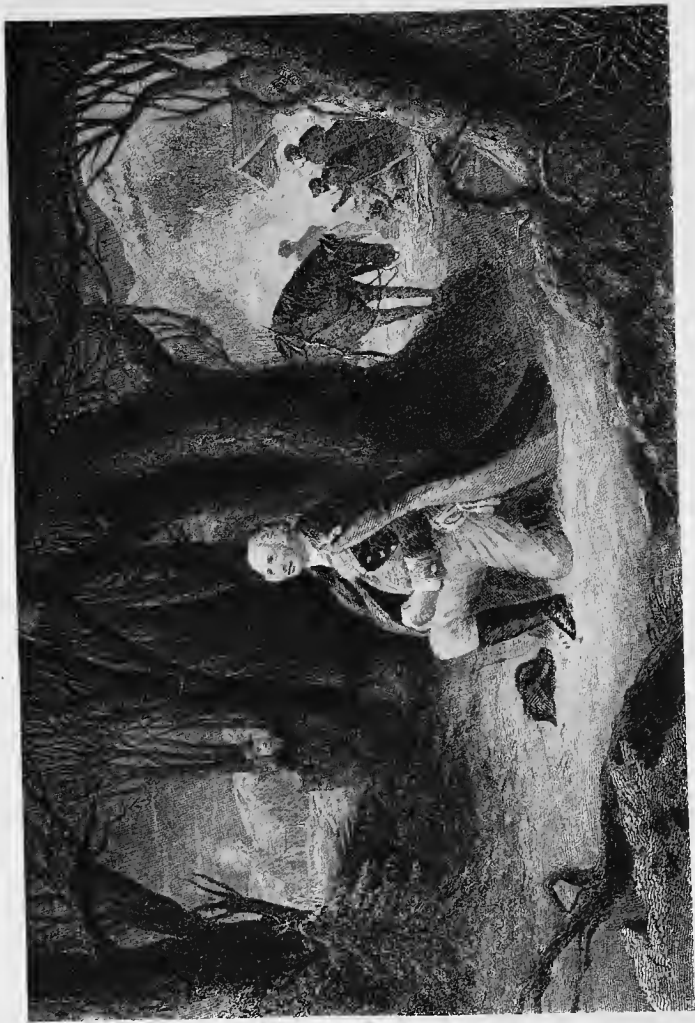
Peter Miller had saved the life of his enemy, perhaps of his only enemy. Michael Wittman, with his head bowed upon his breast, went forth a free man and a changed man.

The power of Christian charity had rescued him from a shameful death, and the cause of patriotism need have no further fears of being harmed by him.

An American Book of Golden Deeds, James Baldwin, p. 102.

"I Can Curse Dem No More!"

After the interview with Congress, Steuben at once repaired to Valley Forge, where Washington was not slow in recognizing his ability; nor was Steuben, on the other hand, at a loss to perceive, in the ragged and motley army which he passed in review, the existence of soldierly qualities which needed nothing so much as training. Disregarding the English prejudice which looked upon the drilling of soldiers as work fit only for sergeants, he took musket in hand and showed what was to be done. Alert and untiring, he worked from morning till night in showing the men how to advance, retreat, or change front without falling into disorder,—how to perform, in short, all the rapid and accurate movements for which the Prussian army had become so famous. It was a revelation to the American troops. Generals, colonels, and captains were fired by the contagion of his example and his tremendous enthusiasm, and for several months the camp was converted into a training-school, in which masters and pupils worked with incessant and furious energy. Steuben was struck with the quickness with which the common soldiers learned their lessons. He had a harmlessly choleric temper, which was part of his overflowing vigor, and sometimes, when drilling an awkward squad, he would exhaust his stock of French and German oaths, and shout for his aide to come and curse them in English. "Viens, mon ami Walker," he would say,—"*viens, mon bon ami. Sacre bleu! Gott vertamn de gaucherie of dese badauts. Je ne puis plus; I can curse dem no more!*" Yet in an incredibly short time, as he afterward wrote, these awkward fellows had acquired a military air, had learned how to carry their arms, and knew



SECRET PRAYER AT VALLEY FORGE

how to form into column, deploy, and execute manœuvres with precision.

The American Revolution, John Fiske, Vol. II, p. 53.

His Secret

With his lean, ragged levies, undismayed,
He crouched among the vigilant hills; a show
To the disdainful, heaven-blinded foe.
Unlauded, unsupported, disobeyed,
Thwarted, maligned, conspired against, betrayed—
Yet nothing could unheart him. Wouldst thou know
His secret? There, in that thicket on the snow,
Washington knelt before his God and prayed.

Washington at Valley Forge, Canon R. G. Sutherland, *Washington's Birthday*, Edited by Robert Haven Schauffler, p. 44.

How the British Spent the Winter

The army's peaceful sojourn in the town from September 26, 1777, to June 18, 1778, was a source of great enjoyment and an unrivaled opportunity for social advancement to the loyalists. It was the harvest of their lives. Even a wicked rebellion could have advantages. One of the loyalist ladies has left some enthusiastic and rather good verses on the delights of that winter.

It was a strange scene in the good old Quaker town with the rebel prisoners eating rats in the Walnut Street jail, while the commissary of prisoners grew rich, and extravagance, speculation, gambling, and European indifference to morals filled the respectable plain brick houses. A Hessian officer held the bank at the game of faro and made a considerable fortune by ruining young Englishmen, many of whom were obliged to sell their commissions and go home penniless. The officers made no attempt to keep their mistresses in the background. One of them drove in her carriage with footmen up and down the lines at a review of the troops, dressed in a costume that was a feminine imitation of the uniform of her paramour's regiment.

Howe's plan, as Lord Chatham said in Parliament, was merely to occupy stations. Washington followed the same plan he had found to work well enough the previous winter which Howe had spent in New York. He fortified himself with intrenchments on some high ground at Valley Forge, about twenty-miles away, very much in the same way that during the last winter he had occupied Morristown Heights. He could there play the long waiting game with Howe as well as anywhere else. Howe could have attacked him at almost any time at Valley Forge and destroyed or captured his starving army. Howe had twenty-thousand men. Washington had nine thousand, counting the sick, starved, and half-naked, and by March three thousand had deserted to the British, and so many others were sick or at home that there were only four thousand men at Valley Forge.

The True History of the American Revolution, Sydney George Fisher, p. 347

The Mischianza

[We forbear to give the fulsome descriptions of the Mischianza furnished by various pens, and will content ourselves with the following, from the pen of a British writer who was present. It illustrates sufficiently the absurdity of the scene.]

"All the colors of the army were placed in a grand avenue three hundred feet in length, lined with the king's troops, between two triumphal arches, for the two brothers, the Admiral Lord Howe and the General Sir William Howe, to march along in pompous procession, followed by a numerous train of attendants, with seven silken Knights of the Blended Rose, and seven more of the Burning Mountain, and fourteen damsels dressed in the Turkish fashion, to an area of one hundred and fifty yards square, lined also with the king's troops; for the exhibition of a tilt and tournament, or mock fight of old chivalry, in honor of those two heroes. On the top of each triumphal arch was a figure of Fame bespangled with stars, blowing from her trumpet, in letters of light, *Tes lauriers sont immortels*, (Thy laurels

are immortal). On this occasion, according to the same writer, "men compared the importance of Sir William's services with the merit he assumed, and the gravity with which he sustained the most excessive praise and adulation."

The unfortunate Major André, at that time a captain, was very efficient in getting up this tawdry and somewhat effeminate pageant. He had promoted private theatricals during the winter, and aided in painting scenery and devising decorations. He wrote a glowing description of the Mischianza, in a letter to a friend, pronouncing it as perhaps the most splendid entertainment ever given by an army to their general. He figured in it as one of the Knights of the Blended Rose. In a letter written to a lady, in the following year, he alludes to his preparations for it as having made him a complete milliner, and offers his services to furnish her supplies in that department.

At the time of this silken and mock heroic display, the number of British chivalry in Philadelphia was nineteen thousand five hundred and thirty, cooped up in a manner by an American force at Valley Forge, amounting, according to official returns, to eleven thousand eight hundred men. Could any triumphal pageant be more ill-placed and ill-timed!

Life of George Washington, Washington Irving Vol. III, p. 463.

CHAPTER XXI

THE CONWAY CONSPIRACY

"Good General, Pluck the Moon from the Sky!"

The germ of the difficulties was to be found where we should expect it, in the difference between the men of speech and the man of action, between the lawmakers and the soldier. Washington had been obliged to tell Congress a great many plain and unpleasant truths. It was part of his duty, and he did it accordingly. He was always dignified, calm, and courteous, but he had an alarmingly direct way with him, especially when he was annoyed. He was simple almost to bluntness, but now and then he would use a grave irony which must have made listening ears tingle. Congress was patriotic and well-intentioned, and on the whole stood bravely by its general, but it was unversed in war, very impatient, and at times wildly impracticable. Here is a letter which depicts the situation, and the relation between the general and his rulers, with great clearness. March 14, 1777, Washington wrote to the President:

"Could I accomplish the important objects so eagerly wished by Congress,—'confining the enemy within their present quarters, preventing their getting supplies from the country, and totally subduing them before they are reinforced,'—I should be happy indeed. But what prospect or hope can there be of my effecting so desirable a work at this time?"

We can imagine how exasperating such requests and suggestions must have been. It was very much as if Congress had said: "Good General, bring in the Atlantic tides and drown the enemy; or pluck the moon from the sky and give it to us, as a mark of your loyalty." . Sam

Adams, a born agitator and trained politician, unequaled almost in our history as an organizer and manager of men, able, narrow, coldly fierce, the man of the town meeting and the caucus, had no possibility of intellectual sympathy with the silent, patient, hard-gripping soldier, hemmed with difficulties, but ever moving straight forward to his object, with occasional wild gusts of reckless fighting passion. John Adams, too, brilliant of speech and pen, ardent, patriotic, and high-minded, was, in his way, out of touch with Washington. Although he moved Washington's appointment, he began almost immediately to find fault with him, an exercise to which he was extremely prone.

There were others, too, outside New England who were discontented, and among them Richard Henry Lee, from the General's own State. He was evidently critical and somewhat unfriendly at this time, although the reasons for his being so are not now very distinct. Then there was Mr. Clark of New Jersey, an excellent man, who thought the General was invading popular rights; and to him might be added others who vaguely felt things might be better than they were. This party, adverse to Washington, obtained the appointment of Gates to the northern department, under whom the army won a great victory, and they were correspondingly happy. John Adams wrote his wife that one cause of thanksgiving was that the tide had not been turned by the commander-in-chief and southern troops, for the adulation would have been intolerable; and that a man may be wise and virtuous and not a deity.

George Washington, Henry Cabot Lodge, Vol. I, p. 207

He Had Long Cherished a Secret Hostility

Washington had already been disgusted by the overweening presumption of Conway, and was surprised to hear that his application was likely to be successful. He wrote on the 17th of October, to Richard Henry Lee, then

in Congress, warning him that such an appointment would be as unfortunate a measure as ever was adopted—one that would give a fatal blow to the existence of the army. "Upon so interesting a subject," observes he, "I must speak plainly. The duty I owe my country, the ardent desire I have to promote its true interests, and justice to individuals, require this of me. General Conway's merit as an officer, and his importance in this army, exist more in his own imagination than in reality. For it is a maxim with him to leave no service of his own untold, nor to want anything which is to be obtained by importunity. . . . I would ask why the youngest brigadier in the service should be put over the heads of the oldest, and thereby take rank and command of gentlemen who but yesterday were his seniors; gentlemen who, as I will be bound to say in behalf of some of them at least, are of sound judgment and unquestionable bravery. . . . This truth I am well assured of, that they will not serve under him. I leave you to guess, therefore, at the situation this army would be in at so important a crisis, if this event should take place."

This opposition to his presumptuous aspirations, at once threw Conway into a faction forming under the auspices of General Mifflin. This gentleman had recently tendered his resignation of the commission of major-general and quartermaster-general on the plea of ill health, but was busily engaged in intrigues against the commander-in-chief, towards whom he had long cherished a secret hostility. Conway now joined with him heart and hand, and soon became so active and prominent a member of the faction that it acquired the name of *Conway's Cabal*. The object was to depreciate the military character of Washington, in comparison with that of Gates, to whom was attributed the whole success of the northern campaign. Gates was perfectly ready for that elevation. He was intoxicated by his good fortune, and seemed to forget that he had reaped where he had not sown, and that the defeat of Burgoyne

had been insured by plans concerted and put in operation before his arrival in the northern department.

Life of George Washington, Washington Irving, Vol. III, p. 349.

The Opposition's High Water Mark

In the midst of his struggle to hold the Delaware forts, and of his efforts to get back his troops from the north, a story came to him that arrested his attention. Wilkinson, of Gates's staff, had come to Congress with the news of the surrender. He had been fifteen days on the road and three days in getting his papers in order, and when it was proposed to give him a sword, Dr. Witherspoon, canny Scot as he was, suggested they had better "gie the lad a pair of spurs." This thrust and some delay seem to have nettled Wilkinson, who was swelling with importance, and although he was finally made a brigadier-general, he rode off to the north much ruffled. In later days Wilkinson was secretive enough; but in his hot youth he could not hold his tongue, and on his way back to Gates he talked. What he said was marked and carried to headquarters, and on November 9th Washington wrote to Conway:

"A letter which I received last night contained the following paragraph,—'In a letter from General Conway to General Gates he says, "*Heaven has determined to save your country, or a weak general and bad counsellors would have ruined it.*" I am, sir, your humble servant,"" etc.

This curt note fell upon Conway with stunning effect. It is said that he tried to apologize, and he certainly resigned. As to Gates, he fell to writing letters filled with expressions of wonder as to who had betrayed him, and writhed most pitiably under the exposure. Washington's replies are models of cold dignity, and the calm indifference with which he treated the whole matter, while holding Gates to the point with relentless grasp, is very interesting. The cabal was seriously shaken by this sudden blow. It must have dawned upon them dimly that they might have

mistaken their man, and that the silent soldier was perhaps not so easy to dispose of by an intrigue as they had fancied. Nevertheless, they rallied, taking advantage of the feeling in Congress created by Burgoyne's surrender, they set to work to get control of military matters. The board of war was enlarged to five, with Gates at its head and Mifflin a member, and, thus constituted, it proceeded to make Conway inspector-general, with the rank of major-general. This, after Conway's conduct, was a direct insult to Washington, and marks the highest point attained by his opponents.

George Washington, Henry Cabot Lodge, Vol. I., p. 214.

The "Cabal"

When they turned from intrigue to action, however, they began to fail. One of their pet schemes was the conquest of Canada, and with this object Lafayette was sent to the lakes, only to find that no preparations had been made, because the originators of the idea were ignorant and inefficient. The expedition promptly collapsed and was abandoned, with much instruction in consequence to Congress and the people. Under their control the commissariat also went hopelessly to pieces, and a committee of Congress proceeded to Valley Forge and found that in this direction, too, the new managers had grievously failed. Then the original Conway letter, uncovered so unceremoniously by Washington, kept returning to plague its author. Gates's correspondence went on all through the winter, and with every letter Gates floundered more and more, and Washington's replies grew more and more freezing and severe. Gates undertook to throw the blame on Wilkinson, who became loftily indignant and challenged him. The two made up their quarrel very soon in a ludicrous manner, but Wilkinson in the interval had an interview with Washington, which revealed an amount of duplicity and perfidy on the part of the cabal, so shocking to the former's sensitive nature, that he resigned his secretaryship of the board of

war on account, as he frankly said, of the treachery and falsehood of Gates. Such a quarrel of course hurt the cabal, but it was still more weakened by Gates himself, whose only idea seemed to be to supersede Washington by slighting him, refusing troops, and declining to propose his health at dinner—methods as unusual as they were feeble.

The cabal, in fact, was so weak in ability and character that the moment any responsibility fell upon its members it was certain to break down, but the absolutely fatal obstacle to its schemes was the man it aimed to overthrow. The idea evidently was that Washington could be driven to resign.

Thus he went on his way through the winter, silent except when obliged to answer some friend, and always ready to meet his enemies. When Conway complained to Congress of his reception at camp, Washington wrote the president that he was not given to dissimulation, and that he certainly had been cold in his manner. He wrote to Lafayette that slander had been busy, and that he had urged his officers to be cool and dispassionate as to Conway, adding, "I have no doubt that everything happens for the best, that we shall triumph over all our misfortunes, and in the end be happy; when, my dear Marquis, if you will give me your company in Virginia, we will laugh at our past difficulties and the folly of others." But though he wrote thus lightly to his friends, he followed Gates sternly enough, and kept that gentleman occupied as he drove him from point to point. Among other things he touched upon Conway's character with sharp irony, saying, "It is, however, greatly to be lamented that this adept in military science did not employ his abilities in the progress of the campaign, in pointing out those wise measures which were calculated to give us 'that degree of success we could reasonably expect!'"

Poor Gates did not find these letters pleasant reading, and one more curt note, on February 24th, finished the controversy. By that time the cabal was falling to pieces, and

in a little while was dispersed. Wilkinson's resignation was accepted, Mifflin was put under Washington's orders, and Gates was sent to his command in the north. Conway resigned one day in a pet, and found his resignation accepted and his power gone with unpleasant suddenness. Then he got into a quarrel with General Cadwalader on account of his attacks on the commander-in-chief. The quarrel ended in a duel. Conway was badly wounded, and thinking himself dying, wrote a contrite note of apology to Washington, then recovered, left the country, and disappeared from the ken of history. Thus domestic malice and the "bitter party" in Congress failed and perished. They had dashed themselves in vain against the strong man who held firmly both soldiers and people.

George Washington, Henry Cabot Lodge, Vol. 1, p. 216

"General Gates Exalted on the Ruin of My Reputation"

In a letter to Gates, Washington intimated in his own discreet, but always forcible English, that Conway was "a dangerous incendiary," and that Gates was a sneaking enemy to the commander-in-chief, both of which intimations have since been proved entirely accurate. But these two men were not alone in the mischief which, through attacks upon Washington, did great harm to the patriot cause.

Gates and Conway were dangerous principally because, being continually in the Congressional lobby, they organized a party that during the remainder of the war opposed Washington with that mischievous zeal which is strong solely because of its ignorance. Anonymous letters, abusing the commander-in-chief, were sent to Congress, to Governors of States, and to influential private citizens, and Washington was accused even of being opposed to American independence. Washington's reply was principally a letter to Mr. Laurens, President of Congress, in which he said: "My enemies take an ungenerous advantage of me. They know the delicacy of my situation, and that motives of

policy deprive me of the defense I might otherwise make against their insidious attacks. They know I cannot combat their insinuations, however injurious, without disclosing secrets which it is of the utmost moment to conceal." The purpose of the cabal was, Washington says, "that General Gates was to be exalted on the ruin of my reputation and influence. This I am authorized to say from undeniable facts in our possession."

These facts Washington never disclosed; modestly assuming that they only affected him personally, he seems to have considered them of no general interest.

Two more of the mere nothings that Washington had to attend to were the disciplining and supplying of the army. Conway, the Inspector-general, and Mifflin, the Quartermaster-general, had been so busily engaged in helping Gates undermine Washington that they had allowed their official duties to go undone. Contractors were profiting by theft and jobbery, as contractors always do when unwatched. Washington made Greene Quartermaster-general and gave Conway's position to Baron Steuben, who, in addition to being able to swear in three languages and maintaining health and energy without drinking rum, possessed in a high degree every soldierly quality that his new position required. Greene also was the right man in the right place. Both men attended strictly to business, so before long, and for the first time in its existence, the American army was fairly drilled, and whatever clothing, food, and ammunition were provided for it reached their destination and were put where they would do the most good.

George Washington, John Habberton, p. 167.

"I Mean Not to Shrink From the Cause"

Gates was greatly perplexed to know what to do, but he finally wrote to Washington as if there were some wretch who had been stealing letters and might be discovering the secrets of the American leaders. He begged Washington

to help him find the rascal. Washington replied, giving him the exact manner in which the letter came into his hands, and then closed with a few sentences that showed Gates clearly that he had lost the confidence of his commander-in-chief.

That particular occasion passed, but presently the cabal showed its head again, this time working through Congress. It secured the appointment of a Board of War, with Gates at the head, and a majority of members from men who were hostile to Washington. Now, they thought, Washington will resign, and to help matters they spread the report that Washington was about to resign. The general check-mated them at once by a letter to a friend, in which he wrote:—

“To report a design is among the arts which those who are endeavoring to effect a change are practising to bring it to pass. . . While the public are satisfied with my endeavors, I mean not to shrink from the cause. But the moment her voice, *not that of faction*, calls upon me to resign, I shall do it with as much pleasure as ever the wearied traveler retired to rest.”

The cabal was not yet defeated. It had failed by round-about methods. It looked about in Congress and counted the disaffected to see if it would be possible to get a majority vote in favor of a motion to arrest the commander-in-chief. So at least the story runs which, from its nature, would not be found in any record, but was whispered from one man to another. The day came when the motion was to be tried; the conspiracy leaked out, and Washington's friends bestirred themselves. They sent post-haste for one of their number, Gouverneur Morris, who was absent in camp; but they feared they could not get him in time. In their extremity, they went to William Duer, a member from New York, who was dangerously ill. Duer sent for his doctor.

“Doctor,” he asked, “can I be carried to Congress?”

"Yes, but at the risk of your life," replied the physician.

"Do you mean that I should expire before reaching the place?" earnestly inquired the patient.

"No," came the answer; "but I would not answer for your leaving it alive."

"Very well, sir. You have done your duty and I will do mine!" exclaimed Duer. "Prepare a litter for me; if you will not, somebody else will, but I prefer your aid."

The demand was in earnest, and Duer had already started when it was announced that Morris had come direct from the camp with the latest news of what was going on there. His vote would make it impossible for the enemies of Washington to carry their point; their opportunity was lost, and they never recovered it.

George Washington, an Historical Biography, Horace E. Scudder, p. 182.

General Conway's Apology

As General Conway takes no further part in the events of this history, we shall briefly dispose of him. Disappointed in his aims, he became irritable in his temper, and offensive in his manners, and frequently indulged in acrimonious language respecting the commander-in-chief, that was highly resented by the army. In consequence of some dispute he became involved in a duel with General John Cadwalader, in which he was severely wounded. Thinking his end approaching, he addressed the following penitential letter to Washington.

"PHILADELPHIA, 23 July, 1778.

"SIR:—I find myself just able to hold the pen during a few minutes, and take this opportunity of expressing my sincere grief for having done, written, or said anything disagreeable to your Excellency. My career will soon be over, therefore justice and truth prompt me to declare my last sentiments. You are in my eyes the great and good man. May you long enjoy the love, veneration, and esteem of

these States, whose liberties you have asserted by your virtues.

“I am, with the greatest respect, &c.,

“THOMAS CONWAY.”

Contrary to all expectations, he recovered from his wound; but, finding himself without rank in the army, covered with public opprobrium, and his very name become a by-word, he abandoned a country in which he had dishonored himself, and embarked for France in the course of a year.

Life of George Washington, Washington Irving, Vol. III, p. 456, Note.

No Peace for Washington

But even in winter quarters there was no peace for Washington; new torments developed unexpectedly, and one of the largest of these came from the active mind of Washington's much-admired young friend Lafayette. This irrepressible youth wanted to conquer Canada by a concerted movement, in five parts, by the Americans and French. His plans required a force and outlay that would almost have sufficed to capture England, but its very bigness caused Congress to delight in it by a large majority. Some one had sense enough to move that Washington be consulted; the motion was carried, and the commander-in-chief gave so many reasons, all political, why it would be unwise to exchange neighbors at the north, should the movement succeed and France claim as her share of the proceeds her old domain, as she would be justified in doing, that the attractive scheme was finally abandoned.

But Congress did not always think to consult Washington, and as the quality of the members deteriorated as rapidly as is usual in the legislatures of all countries during time of war, contracts and blunders were large and innumerable. What Washington thought of the alleged honorable body may be inferred from a letter that he wrote at

the end of the year, to the speaker of the Virginia House of Delegates: "By a faithful laborer in the cause, by a man who is daily injuring his private estate without the smallest earthly advantage not common to all in case of a favorable issue to the dispute, by one who wishes the prosperity of America most devoutly, but sees it, or thinks he sees it, on the brink of ruin, you are besought most earnestly, my dear Colonel Harrison, to exert yourself by endeavoring to rescue your country by sending your best and ablest men to Congress. . . . They must not content themselves with the enjoyment of places of honor or profit in their own State while the common interests of America are moldering and sinking into irretrievable ruin. . . . If I were to be called upon to draw a picture of the times and of men, from what I have seen, heard, and in part know, I should in one word say that idleness, dissipation, and extravagance seem to have laid fast hold of the most of them; that speculation, peculation, and an insatiable thirst for riches seem to have got the better of every other consideration, and almost of every order of men; that party disputes and personal quarrels are the great business of the day, while the momentous concern of an empire, a great and accumulating debt, ruined finances, depreciated money and want of credit, which in its consequences is the want of everything, are but secondary considerations and postponed from day to day, from week to week, as if our affairs wore the most promising aspect."

George Washington, John Habberton, p. 180.

CHAPTER XXII

THE BATTLE OF MONMOUTH AND THE TREACHERY OF CHARLES LEE

Detailed Account of the Battle of Monmouth

On the night of June 27th the left wing of the British army, 8,000 strong, commanded by Lord Cornwallis, encamped near Monmouth Court House, on the road from Allentown. The right wing, of about equal strength, and composed chiefly of Hessians under Kynphausen, lay just beyond the court house on the road to Middletown. In order to march the right wing took the lead, conveying the immense baggage train. The left wing, following in the rear, was the part exposed to danger, and with it stayed Sir Henry Clinton. The American advance under Lee, 6,000 strong, lay about five miles northeast of the British line, and Washington, with the main body, was only three miles behind. Lee's orders from Washington were positive and explicit. He was to gain the flank of the British left wing and attack it vigorously, while Washington was to come up and complete its discomfiture. Lee's force was ample, in quantity and quality, for the task assigned to it, and there was fair ground for hope that the flower of the British army might thus be cut off and captured or destroyed. Since the war began there had hardly been such a golden opportunity.

Sunday, the 28th of June, was a day of fiery heat, the thermometer showing 96° in the shade. Early in the morning Clinton moved cautiously. Kynphausen made all haste forward on the Middletown road, and the left wing followed till it had passed more than a mile beyond Monmouth Court House, when it found itself outflanked on the north

by the American columns. Lee had advanced from Freehold Church by the main road, crossing two deep ravines upon causeways; and, now, while his left wing was folding about Cornwallis on the north, occupying superior ground, his centre, under Wayne, was close behind, and his right, under Lafayette, had already passed the Court House and was threatening the other end of the British line on the south. Cornwallis instantly changed front to meet the danger on the north, and a detachment was thrown down the road toward the Court House to check Lafayette. The British position was one of extreme peril, but the behavior of the American commander now became very extraordinary. When Wayne was beginning his attack, he was ordered by Lee to hold back and simply make a feint, as the main attack was to be made in another quarter. While Wayne was wondering at this, the British troops coming down the road were seen directing their march so as to come between Wayne and Lafayette. It would be easy to check them, but the marquis had no sooner started than Lee ordered him back, murmuring about its being impossible to stand against British soldiers. Lafayette's suspicions were now aroused, and he sent a dispatch in all haste to Washington, saying that his presence in the field was sorely needed. The army was bewildered. Fighting had hardly begun, but their position was obviously so good that the failure to make prompt use of it suggested some unknown danger. One of the divisions on the left was now ordered back by Lee, and the others, seeing this retrograde movement, and understanding it as the prelude to a general retreat, began likewise to fall back. All thus retreated, though without flurry or disorder, to the high ground just east of the second ravine which they had crossed in their advance. All the advantage of their offensive movement was thus thrown away without a struggle, but the position they had now reached was excellent for a defensive fight. To the amazement of everybody, Lee ordered the retreat to be continued across the

marshy ravine. As they crossed upon the causeway the ranks began to fall into some disorder. Many sank exhausted from the heat. No one could tell from what they were fleeing, and the exultant ardor with which they had begun to enfold the British line gave place to bitter disappointment, which vented itself in passionate curses. So they hurried on, with increasing disorder, till they were approaching the brink of the westerly ravine, where the craven commander met Washington riding up, pale with anger, looking like an avenging deity.

"What is the meaning of all this?" shouted Washington. His tone was so fierce and his look so threatening that the traitor shook in his stirrups, and could make no answer. When the question was repeated with yet greater fierceness, and further emphasized by a tremendous oath, he flew into a rage, and complained at having been sent to beard the whole British army. "I am very sorry," said Washington, "that you undertook the command if you did not mean to fight." Lee replied that he did not think it prudent to bring on a general engagement, which was, however, precisely what he had been sent out to do. "Whatever your opinions may have been," said Washington sharply, "I expected my orders to be obeyed"; and with these words he wheeled about to stop the retreat and form a new front. There was not a moment to lose, for the British were within a mile of them, and their fire began before the line of battle could be formed. To throw a mass of disorderly fugitives in the face of advancing reinforcements, as Lee had been on the point of doing, was to endanger the organization of the whole force.

It was now that the admirable results of Steuben's teachings were to be seen. The retreating soldiers immediately wheeled and formed under fire with as much coolness and precision as they could have shown on parade, and while they stopped the enemy's progress, Washington rode back and brought up the main body of his army.

On some heights to the left of the enemy Greene placed a battery which enfiladed their lines, while Wayne attacked them vigorously in front. After a brave resistance, the British were driven back upon the second ravine which Lee had crossed in the morning's advance. Washington now sent word to Steuben, who was a couple of miles in the rear, telling him to bring up three brigades and press the retreating enemy. Some time before this he had again met Lee and ordered him to the rear, for his suspicion was now thoroughly aroused. As the traitor rode away from the field he met Steuben advancing, and tried to work one final piece of mischief. He tried to persuade Steuben to halt, alleging that he must have misunderstood Washington's orders; but the worthy baron was not to be trifled with, and doggedly kept on his way. The British were driven in some confusion across the ravine, and were just making a fresh stand on the high ground east of it when night put an end to the strife. Washington sent out parties to attack them on both flanks as soon as day should dawn; but Clinton withdrew in the night, leaving his wounded behind, and by daybreak had joined Knyphausen on the heights of Middletown, whither it was useless to follow him.

The American Revolution, John Fiske, Vol. II, p. 61.

"They Are All Coming This Way!"

As the commander-in-chief, accompanied by a numerous suite, approached the vicinity of Monmouth Court House, he was met by a little fifer-boy, who archly observed, "They are all coming this way, your honor." "Who are coming, my little man?" asked General Knox. "Why our boys, your honor, our boys, and the British right after them," replied the little musician. "Impossible," exclaimed Washington. And giving the spur to his charger, proceeded at full gallop to the eminence a short distance ahead. There to his extreme pain and mortification, it was discovered that the boy's intelligence was but too true. The very *élite*

of the American army, five thousand picked officers and men, were in full retreat, closely pursued by the enemy. The first inquiry of the chief was for Major-general Lee, who commanded the advance, and who soon appeared, when a warm conversation ensued, that ended by the major-general being ordered to the rear. During this interview, an incident of rare and chivalric interest occurred. Lieutenant-colonel Hamilton, *aide* to the general-in-chief, leaped from his horse, and, drawing his sword, addressed the General with—"We are betrayed; your excellency and the army are betrayed, and the moment has arrived when every true friend of America and her cause must be ready to die in their defence." Washington, charmed with the generous enthusiasm of his favorite *aide*, yet deemed the same ill-timed, and pointing to the colonel's horse that was cropping the herbage, unconscious of the great scene enacting around him, calmly observed, "Colonel Hamilton, you will take your horse."

Recollections of Washington, by His Adopted Son, George Washington Parke Custis, p. 217.

Varying Versions by Other Witnesses

Dr. Alfred Alexander Woodhull, according to Edward Everett Hale, used to tell of his grand-uncle, David Bredding's account of the wrath of Washington against Lee at Monmouth. Bredding was one of General Washington's *aides*, and was sent by Maxwell to report to General Washington of Lee's retreating. The young *aide* found Washington, who asked quickly:

"Young man, can you lead me to General Lee?"

The *aide* said he could.

"Lead on," said the commander-in-chief, "and I will follow."

Aide and general rode on a furious rate until they met General Lee, who was leading the retreat of his command.

"Why have you acted thus?" demanded Washington, whose usually calm face was blazing with fury.

Lee whined that the American troops could not stand the British bayonets.

"You damned poltroon!" Washington shouted in his righteous wrath, "you have never tried them."

The Rev. Dr. Ammi Bradford Hyde, Vice-chancellor of the University of Denver, Colorado, told the following story to the writer:

"My grandfather, Jared Hinckley, was, one campaign excepted, near the person of Washington from Cambridge to Yorktown—that is, during the entire War of the Revolution. As I sat on his knee, or at his feet, he gave endless stories of his great commander, whom he reckoned more than human.

"At the battle of Monmouth Grandfather Hinckley was hardly ten yards from the spot where Washington, coming upon the scene, met Lee retreating.

"'General Lee, you have disobeyed my orders!' came loud and clear from Washington's lips.

"'By God, I have *not*!' yelled Lee.

"'By *God*, you *have*! Go to the rear,' thundered Washington, his face ablaze, and re-forming with furious energy, rescued and regained the day. Calm histories soften the incident. I give you what Grandfather Hinckley said he heard and saw."

W. W.

"Never Had I Beheld So Superb a Man"

The general-in-chief now set himself in earnest about restoring the fortunes of the day. He ordered Colonel Stewart and Lieutenant-Colonel Ramsay, with their regiments, to check the advance of the enemy, which service was gallantly performed; while the general, in person, proceeded to form his second line. He rode, on the morning of the twenty-eighth of June, and for that time only during the war, a white charger that had been presented to him. From the overpowering heat of the day, and the deep and

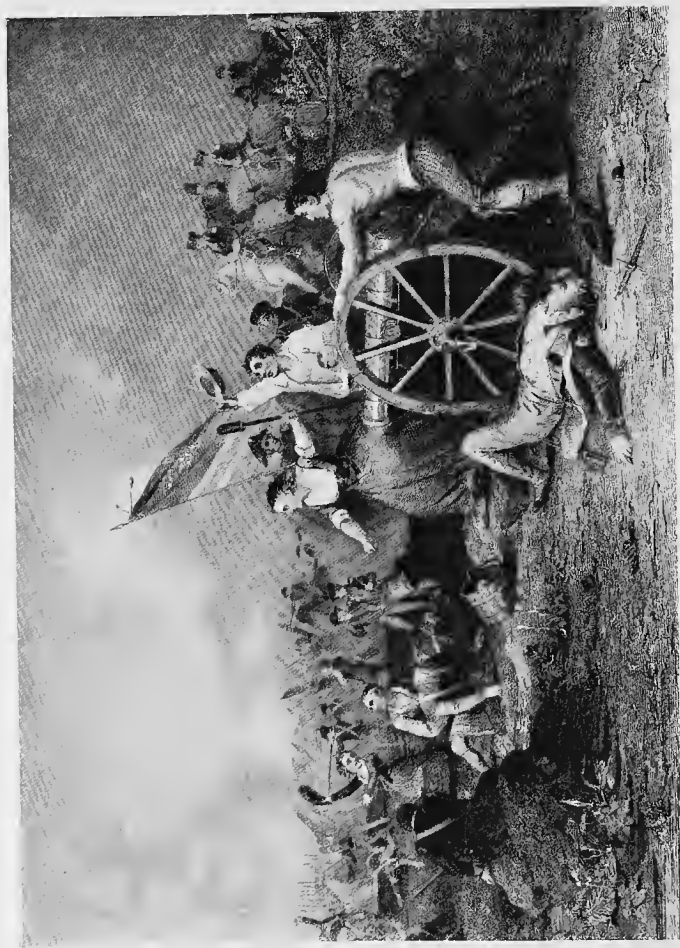
sandy nature of the soil, the spirited horse sank under his rider, and expired on the spot. The chief was instantly remounted upon a chestnut blood-mare, with a flowing mane and tail, of Arabian breed, which his servant Billy was leading. It was upon this beautiful animal, covered with foam, that the American general flew along the line, cheering the soldiers in the familiar and endearing language ever used by the officer to the soldier of the Revolution, of "Stand fast, *my boys*, and receive the enemy; the southern troops are advancing to support you."

The person of Washington, always graceful, dignified, and commanding, showed to peculiar advantage when mounted; it exhibited, indeed, the very *beau idéal* of a perfect cavalier. The good Lafayette, during his last visit to America, delighted to discourse of the "times that tried men's souls." From the venerated friend of our country we derived a most graphic description of Washington and the field of battle. Lafayette said, "At Monmouth I commanded a division, and, it may be supposed I was pretty well occupied; still I took time, amid the roar and confusion of the conflict, to admire our beloved chief, who, mounted on a splendid charger, rode along the ranks amid the shouts of the soldiers, cheering them by his voice and example, and restoring to our standard the fortunes of the fight. I thought then, as now," continued Lafayette, "that never had I beheld so *superb a man*."

Recollections of Washington, by His Adopted Son, George Washington Parke Custis, p. 219.

The Doomed Gun Was No Longer Deemed Unlucky

Nor must we omit, among our incidents of the battle of Monmouth, to mention the achievement of the famed Captain Molly, a *nom de guerre* given to the wife of a matross in Proctor's artillery. At one of the guns of Proctor's battery, six men had been killed or wounded. It was deemed an unlucky gun, and murmurs arose that it should be drawn



Engraved by J. Rogers from the Painting by D. M. Carter.

"CAPTAIN MOLLY" IN THE BATTLE OF MONMOUTH

back and abandoned. At this juncture, while Captain Molly was serving some water for the refreshment of the men, her husband received a shot in the head, and fell lifeless under the wheels of the piece. The heroine threw down the pail of water, and crying to her dead consort, "Lie there, my darling, while I avenge ye," grasped the ramrod the lifeless hand of the poor fellow had just relinquished, sent home the charge, and called to the matrosses to prime and fire. It was done. Then entering the sponge into the smoking muzzle of the cannon, the heroine performed to admiration the duties of the most expert artilleryman, while loud shouts from the soldiers rang along the line. The doomed gun was no longer deemed unlucky, and the fire of the battery became more vivid than ever. The Amazonian fair one kept her post till night closed the action, when she was introduced to General Greene, who, complimenting her upon her courage and conduct, the next morning presented her to the commander-in-chief. Washington received her graciously, gave her a piece of gold, and assured her that her services should not be forgotten.

This remarkable and intrepid woman survived the Revolution, never for an instant laying aside the appellation she had so nobly won, and levying contributions upon both civil and military, whenever she recounted the tale of the doomed gun, and the famous Captain Molly at the battle of Monmouth.

Recollections of Washington, by His Adopted Son, George Washington Parke Custis.
p. 224.

Captain Molly at Monmouth

On the bloody field of Monmouth flashed the guns of Greene
and Wayne;
Fiercely roared the tide of battle, thick the sward was
heaped with slain.
Foremost, facing death and danger, Hessian horse and
grenadier,
In the vanguard, fiercely fighting, stood an Irish cannoneer.

Loudly roared his iron cannon, mingling ever in the strife,
And beside him, firm and daring, stood his faithful Irish
wife;

Of her bold contempt of danger Greene and Lee's brigade
could tell,

Every one knew "Captain Molly," and the army loved her
well.

Surged the roar of battle round them, swiftly flew the iron
hail;

Forward flashed a thousand bayonets that lone battery to
assail;

From the foeman's foremost columns swept a furious fusillade,

Mowing down the massed battalions in the ranks of Greene's
brigade.

Fast and faster worked the gunner, soiled with powder,
blood, and dust;

English bayonets shone before him, shot and shell around
him burst;

Still he fought with reckless daring, stood and manned her
long and well,

Till at last the gallant fellow—dead beside his cannon fell.

With a bitter cry of sorrow, and a dark and angry frown,
Looked that band of gallant patriots at their gunner stricken
down.

"Fall back, comrades! It is folly thus to strive against the
foe."

"No, not so!" cried Irish Molly, "we can strike another blow."

Quickly leaped she to the cannon in her fallen husband's
place,

Sponged and rammed it fast and steady, fired it in the foe-
man's face.

Flashed another ringing volley, roared another from the
gun;
"Boys, hurrah!" cried gallant Molly, "for the flag of Wash-
ington!"

Greene's brigade, though shorn and shattered, slain and
bleeding half their men,
When they heard that Irish slogan, turned and charged the
foe again;
Knox and Wayne and Morgan rally, to the front they for-
ward wheel,
And before their rushing onset Clinton's English columns
reel.

Still the cannon's voice in anger rolled and rattled o'er the
plain,
Till there lay in swarms around it mingled heaps of Hessian
slain.
"Forward! charge them with the bayonet!" 'twas the voice
of Washington;
And there burst a fiery greeting from the Irish woman's gun.

Monckton falls; against his columns leap the troops of Wayne
and Lee,
And before their reeking bayonets Clinton's red battalions
flee;
Morgan's rifles, fiercely flashing, thin the foe's retreating
ranks,
And behind them, onward dashing, Ogden hovers on their
flanks.

Fast they fly, those boasting Britons, who in all their glory
came,
With their brutal Hessian hirelings to wipe out our country's
name.

Proudly floats the starry banner; Monmouth's glorious field
is won;

And in triumph Irish Molly stands beside her smoking gun.

Captain Molly at Monmouth, William Collins, *The American Flag*, Edited by Harlan
Hoyt Horner, p. 98.

After Monmouth

The British loss in the battle of Monmouth was about 416, and the American loss was 362. On both sides there were many deaths from sunstroke. The battle has usually been claimed as a victory for the Americans; and so it was, in a certain sense, as they drove the enemy from the field. Strategically considered, however, Lord Stanhope is quite right in calling it a drawn battle. The purpose for which Washington undertook it was foiled by the treachery of Lee. Nevertheless, in view of the promptness with which Washington turned defeat into victory, and of the greatly increased efficiency which it showed in the soldiers, the moral advantage was doubtless with the Americans. It deepened the impression produced by the recovery of Philadelphia, it silenced the cavillers against Washington, and its effect upon Clinton's army was disheartening. More than 2,000 of his men, chiefly Hessians, deserted in the course of the following week.

During the night after the battle, the behavior of Lee was the theme of excited discussion among the American officers. By the next day, having recovered his self-possession, he wrote a petulant letter to Washington, demanding an apology for his language on the battle-field. Washington's reply was as follows:

"Sir,—I received your letter, expressed, as I conceive, in terms highly improper. I am not conscious of making use of any very singular expressions at the time of meeting you, as you intimate. What I recollect to have said was dictated by duty and warranted by the occasion. As soon as circumstances will permit, you shall have an opportunity

of justifying yourself to the army, to Congress, to America, and to the world in general; or of convincing them that you were guilty of a breach of orders, and of misbehavior before the enemy on the 28th instant, in not attacking them as you had been directed, and in making an unnecessary, disorderly, and shameful retreat."

To this terrible letter Lee sent the following impudent answer:

"You can afford me no greater pleasure than in giving me the opportunity of showing to America the sufficiency of her respective servants. I trust that temporary power of office and the tinsel dignity attending it will not be able, by all the mists they can raise, to obfuscate the bright rays of truth."

Washington replied by putting Lee under arrest. A court-martial was at once convened, before which he was charged with disobedience of orders in not attacking the enemy, with misbehavior on the field in making an unnecessary and shameful retreat, and lastly, with gross disrespect to the commander-in-chief. After a painstaking trial, which lasted more than a month, he was found guilty on all three charges, and suspended from command in the army *for the term of one year*.

This absurdly inadequate sentence is an example of the extreme and sometimes ill-judged humanity which has been wont to characterize judicial proceedings in America. Many a European soldier has been ruthlessly shot for less serious misconduct and on less convincing evidence. A general can be guilty of no blacker crime than knowingly to betray his trust on the field of battle. But in Lee's case the very enormity of his crime went far to screen him from the punishment which it deserved.

The American Revolution, John Fiske, Vol. II, p. 65.

Lee, the Traitor, Disgraced

Historians for a long time imitated the clemency of the court-martial by speaking of the "waywardness" of

General Lee. Nearly eighty years elapsed before the discovery of that document which obliges us to put the worst interpretation upon his acts, while it enables us clearly to understand the motives which prompted them. Lee was nothing but a selfish adventurer. He had no faith in the principles for which the Americans were fighting, or indeed any principles. He came here to advance his own fortunes, and hoped to be made commander-in-chief. Disappointed in this, he began at once to look with hatred and envy upon Washington, and sought to thwart his purposes, while at the same time he intrigued with the enemy. He became infatuated with the idea of playing some such part in the American Revolution as Monk had played in the Restoration of Charles II. This explains his conduct in the autumn of 1776, when he refused to march to the support of Washington. Should Washington be defeated and captured, then Lee, as next in command and at the head of a separate army, might negotiate for peace. His conduct as prisoner in New York, first in soliciting an interview with Congress, then in giving aid and counsel to the enemy, is all to be explained in the same way. And his behavior in the Monmouth campaign was part and parcel of the same crooked policy. Lord North's commission had just arrived from England to offer terms to the Americans, but in the exultation over Saratoga and the French alliance, now increased by the recovery of Philadelphia, there was little hope of their effecting anything. The spirits of these Yankees, thought Lee, must not be suffered to rise too high, else they will never listen to reason. So he wished to build a bridge of gold for Clinton to retreat by; and when he found it impossible to prevent an attack, his second thoughts led him to take command, in order to keep the game in his own hands. Should Washington now incur defeat by adopting a course which Lee had emphatically condemned as impracticable, the impatient prejudices upon which the cabal had played might be revived. The downfall of Washington would

perhaps be easy to compass; and the schemer would thus not only enjoy the humiliation of the man whom he so bitterly hated, but he might fairly hope to succeed him in the chief command, and thus have an opportunity of bringing the war to a "glorious" end through a negotiation with Lord North's commissioners. Such thoughts as these were the impracticable schemes of a vain, egotistical dreamer. That Washington and Chatham, had that great statesman been still alive, might have brought the war to an honorable close through open and frank negotiation was perhaps not impossible. That such a man as Lee, by paltering with agents of Lord North, should effect anything but mischief and confusion was inconceivable. But selfishness is always incompatible with sound judgment, and Lee's wild schemes were quite in keeping with his character. The method he adopted for carrying them out was equally so. It would have been impossible for a man of strong military instincts to have relaxed his clutch upon an enemy in the field, as Lee did at the battle of Monmouth. If Arnold had been there that day, with his head never so full of treason, an irresistible impulse would doubtless have led him to attack the enemy tooth and nail, and the treason would have waited till the morrow.

As usually happens in such cases, the selfish schemer overreached himself. Washington won a victory after all; the treachery was detected, and the traitor disgraced. Maddened by the destruction of his air-castles, Lee now began writing scurrilous articles in the newspapers. He could not hear Washington's name mentioned without losing his temper, and his venomous tongue at length got him into a duel with Colonel Laurens, one of Washington's aids and son of the president of Congress. He came out of the affair with nothing worse than a wound in the side; but when, a little later, he wrote an angry letter to Congress, he was summarily expelled from the army. "Ah, I see," he said, aiming a Parthian shot at Washington, "if you wish to

become a great general in America, you must learn to grow tobacco"; and so he retired to a plantation which he had in the Shenandoah valley. He lived to behold the triumph of the cause which he had done so much to injure, and in October, 1782, he died in a mean public-house in Philadelphia, friendless and alone. His last wish was that he might not be buried in consecrated ground, or within a mile of any church or meeting-house because he had kept so much bad company in this world that he did not wish to continue it in the next. But in this he was not allowed to have his way. He was buried in the cemetery of Christ Church in Philadelphia, and many worthy citizens came to the funeral.

The American Revolution, John Fiske, Vol. II, p. 68.

Did General Washington Swear?

The two principal scenes of Washington's alleged violence of temper and gross profanity under its influence were the battle-field of Monmouth in June, 1778, in the third year of his command of the Revolutionary Army, and his own house in Philadelphia in December, 1791, in the third year of his presidency of the United States. Several years ago, in a paper which I had the honor to read before the New York Historical Society, I said with respect to the former occasion:

"Great excitement and want of dignity culminating in violent threats and even gross cursing and profanity have been ascribed to Washington in his interview with Lee. There is no evidence of any historical value to sustain this disgraceful charge, and the man who repeats it ought always to be challenged to the proof. If there was one common vice against which Washington's face was set like a flint, from the beginning to the end of his military career, it was this very habit of profane swearing."

If any proof has been offered to confirm the vulgar stories in vogue concerning the language and demeanor of Washington on that occasion, I have not heard of it; and it



Gen. Benedict Arnold



Gen. Charles Lee

PORTRAITS OF THE TWO TRAITORS

is my firm conviction that nothing of the kind worthy of credit can be discovered; but that any and all attempts to substantiate the reports referred to may be very easily disposed of by any right-minded and competent historical critic. A few words will suffice for my present purpose.

The scenes and events of that day were the subject of a prolonged and very critical investigation while the actors in them were still within reach and, as it were, fresh from the field. General Lee's trial by a general court-martial, beginning on the 4th of July, six days after the battle, ended on the 12th of August, with his suspension from any command in the armies of the United States of North America, for the term of twelve months. The statements of General Washington and General Lee in the correspondence which led to the court-martial, the sworn testimony of the witnesses upon the trial, and the defense of General Lee himself, furnish conclusive evidence of the utter falsehood of these pretended traditions which have gained entrance where they ought never to have been received for a moment.

Labels on Washington, George H. Moore, p. 6.

"I Have No Exclusive Partialities"

While the American army . . . lay encamped in the environs of Morristown, it occurred that the service of the communion . . . was to be administered in the Presbyterian church of that village. In a morning of the previous week, the General . . . visited the house of the Rev. Dr. Jones, then pastor of that church, and . . . accosted him:

"Doctor, I understand that the Lord's Supper is to be celebrated with you next Sunday; I would learn if it accords with the canons of your church to admit communicants of another denomination."

The doctor rejoined—"Most certainly; ours is not the Presbyterian table, General, but the Lord's table." . . .

The General replied, "I am glad of it; that is as it ought to be; but as I was not quite sure of the fact, I thought I would ascertain it from yourself, as I propose to join with you on that occasion. Though a member of the Church of England, I have no exclusive partialities."

Entertaining Anecdotes of Washington (Boston, 1833), p. 62.

CHAPTER XXIII

FRENCH AID AND AMERICAN GREED

Foreign Officers, the French Alliance, and Three Letters

While Washington was putting down the enemies of the United States, Franklin was making friends for it. After the capture of Burgoyne he persuaded the king of France to recognize the United States as an independent nation. Besides this a fleet was fitted out, manned and commanded by the French. But there were long, weary, heartsickening delays before the French arrived.

Congress and the people hailed the French alliance with rejoicings. They had been colonials all their lives and believed a man with foreign advantages must be far superior to any officer who had grown up at home. This truckling to foreigners was bred in the bone. It seems a marvel that Washington's patriotism so quickly burned out all this dross of habit and antecedent. He believed in the home product of men, though some who styled themselves broad-minded accused him of narrow provincialism.

In 1778 he had written to Gouverneur Morris:

"The lavish manner in which rank has hitherto been bestowed on these [foreign] gentlemen will certainly be productive of one or the other of these two evils: either to make it despicable in the eyes of Europe, or become the means of pouring them in upon us like a torrent and adding to our present burden, or the driving of all our own officers out of the service, and throwing not only our army, but our military councils entirely into the hands of foreigners."

Again he wrote to the president of Congress:

"I trust you think me so much a citizen of the world

as to believe I am not easily warped or led away by attachments merely local and American, yet I confess I am not entirely without them."

When Count D'Estaing at last arrived with the French fleet he was too late to keep Lord Howe out of the Delaware, so he turned to New York. He was late there and Washington sent him to co-operate with Sullivan in driving the British out of Rhode Island. There was a delay of ten days and when Sullivan was prepared for attack, Lord Howe's increased fleet came in sight. D'Estaing sailed out to give battle, but a storm came up and scattered both fleets. Then D'Estaing sailed away to Boston to repair damages. General Sullivan and his men were disgusted. The officers drew up a protest which bade fair to offend and drive away the French.

Washington promptly wrote three tactful letters which prevented a disastrous quarrel. To the wrathful Irish general he argued:

"First impressions, you know, are generally longest remembered, and will serve to fix in a great degree our national character among the French. In our conduct toward them we should remember that they are a people old in war, very strict in military etiquette, and apt to take fire when others seem scarcely warmed. Permit me to recommend, in the most particular manner, the cultivation of harmony and good agreement, and your endeavor to destroy that ill-humor which may have got into your officers."

He wrote to Lafayette, the brave young French general:

"Everybody, sir, who reasons will acknowledge the advantage which we have derived from the French fleet, and the zeal of the commander of it; but in a free and republican government you cannot restrain the voice of the multitude. Every man will speak as he thinks, or more properly, without thinking, and consequently will judge of effects without attending to causes. The censures which

have been leveled at the French fleet would more than probably have fallen in a much higher degree upon a fleet of our own if we had had one in the same position."

Then he wrote to D'Estaing, after expressing regret at the difficulties which had been unavoidable:

"It is in the trying circumstances to which your Excellency has been exposed that the virtues of a great mind are displayed in their brightest lustre, and that a general's character is better known than in the moment of victory. It was yours by every title that can give it; and the adverse elements that robbed you of your prize can never deprive you of the glory due you. Though your success has not been equal to your expectations, yet you have the satisfaction of reflecting that you have rendered essential services to the common cause."

Again Washington saved the cause and the country by saving the French alliance. This time it was by his delicate diplomacy.

The Washington Story-Calendar, Wayne Whipple, October 23 to 29, 1910.

Washington's Patriotic Pride

In the autumn, it was reported that the fleet was once more on the northern coast. Washington at once sent officers to be on the lookout at the most likely points, and he wrote elaborately to D'Estaing, setting forth with wonderful perspicuity the incidents of the past, the condition of the present, and the probabilities of the future. He was willing to do anything, or plan anything, provided his allies would join with him. The jealousy so habitual in humanity, which is afraid that some one else might get the glory of a common success, was unknown to Washington, and if he could but drive the British from America, and establish American independence, he was perfectly willing that the glory should take care of itself. But all his wisdom in dealing with the allies was, for the moment, vain. While he was planning for a great stroke, and calling out the militia

of New England, D'Estaing was making ready to relieve Georgia, and a few days after Washington wrote his second letter, the French and Americans assaulted the British works at Savannah, and were repulsed with heavy losses. Then D'Estaing sailed away again, and the second effort of France to aid England's revolted colonies came to an end. Their presence had had a good moral effect, and the dread of D'Estaing's return had caused Clinton to withdraw from Newport and concentrate in New York. This was all that was actually accomplished, and there was nothing for it but to await still another trial and a more convenient season.

With all his courtesy and consideration, with all his readiness to fall in with the wishes and schemes of the French, it must not be supposed that Washington ever went an inch too far in this direction. He valued the French alliance, and proposed to use it to great purpose, but he was not in the least dazzled or blinded by it. Even in the earliest glow of excitement and hope produced by D'Estaing's arrival, Washington took occasion to draw once more the distinction between a valuable alliance and volunteer adventurers, and to remonstrate again with Congress about their reckless profusion in dealing with foreign officers. To Gouverneur Morris he wrote on July 24, 1778:

"The lavish manner in which rank has hitherto been bestowed on these gentlemen will certainly be productive of one or the other of these two evils: either to make it despicable in the eyes of Europe, or become the means of pouring them in upon us like a torrent and adding to our present burden. But it is neither the expense nor the trouble of them that I most dread. There is an evil more extensive in its nature, and fatal in its consequences, to be apprehended, and that is the driving of all our own officers out of the service, and throwing not only our army, but our military councils, entirely into the hands of foreigners.
. . . Baron Steuben, I now find, is also wanting to

quit his inspectorship for a command in the line. This will be productive of much discontent to the brigadiers. In a word, although I think the baron an excellent officer, I wish we had not a single foreigner among us except the Marquis de Lafayette, who acts from very different principles from those which govern the rest." . . .

Again, he said of Steuben;

"I regret that there should be a necessity that his services should be lost to the army; at the same time I think it my duty explicitly to observe to Congress that his desire of having an actual and permanent command in the line cannot be complied with without wounding the feelings of a number of officers, whose rank and merits give them every claim to attention; and that the doing of it would be productive of much dissatisfaction and extensive ill consequences."

George Washington, Henry Cabot Lodge, Vol. I, p. 240.

"Those Monopolizers—Speculators—Peculators!"

Although the Congress offered Washington more exasperating difficulties and excruciating anxieties than the enemy, there was one class of men—for they were not all pure patriots during the Revolution—who wrought him up to a white heat of indignation. These were the ever-present army contractors, those vultures of every war, of whom the commander-in-chief wrote to his military secretary, Joseph Reed, in 1778, as:

"Those murderers of our cause, the monopolizers, forestallers and engrossers! It is much to be lamented that each State, long ere this, has not hunted them down as pests to society and the greatest enemies we have to the happiness of America. I would to God that some one of the most atrocious in each State was hung in gibbets upon a gallows five times as high as the one prepared by

Haman. No punishment, in my opinion, is too great for the man who can build his greatness upon his country's ruin."

He wrote to James Warren, March 31, 1779:

"Nothing, I am convinced, but the depreciation of our currency, aided by stock jobbing and party dissensions, has fed the hopes of the enemy, and kept the British arms in America to this day.

"The measure of their iniquity is not yet filled. . . [There are] glaring instances of its being the interest . . . of too many . . . to continue the war. . . Shall a few designing men, for their own aggrandizement, and to gratify their own avarice, overset the goodly fabric we have been rearing at the expense of so much time, blood and treasure? And shall we at last become the victims of our own abominable lust of gain? Forbid it, Heaven. Forbid it all and every State in the Union, by enacting and enforcing efficacious laws. . . .

"Our cause is noble. It is the cause of mankind, and the danger to it is to be apprehended from ourselves. Shall we slumber and sleep, then, while we should be punishing those miscreants who have brought these troubles upon us and who are aiming to continue us in them; while we should be striving to fill our battalions, and the credit on which everything depends."

The French alliance seemed to aggravate this condition of affairs. People began to think England's power was breaking up and the French would win the victory. Washington wrote to Congress that the American army, not England's, was lamentably weak. Then he added:

"To me, it will appear miraculous if our affairs can maintain themselves much longer in their present train. If either the temper or the resources of the country will not admit of an alteration, we may expect soon to be reduced to the humiliating condition of seeing the cause of America upheld by foreign arms. The generosity of our allies has

a claim to all our confidence and all our gratitude, but it is neither for the honor of America nor for the interest of the common cause, to leave the work entirely to them."

The Washington Story-Calendar, Wayne Whipple, October 30 to November 5, 1910.

A Series of Minor Torments

In the meantime Clinton, being unable to meet Washington, and, indeed, being compelled, by orders, to confine himself to a series of minor torments, was annoying the Americans more than he could have done by a single engagement. One expedition sent out by him at the end of 1778, without the formality of informing Washington where it was going, captured Savannah and behaved so well as to alienate many of the people of Georgia from the patriot cause. Another entered Chesapeake Bay, capturing Norfolk and Portsmouth, where were large quantities of military stores and a number of naval and merchant vessels. Tryon, the New York Tory governor, went up Long Island Sound with a large force, captured New Haven, cruelly neglected to burn down the old dormitories of Yale College, destroyed the town of Fairfield and most of Norwalk, and brought back to Clinton much news of the variety of which, twenty years ago, the "reliable contraband" had a monopoly. Tryon had projected and Clinton entertained a movement against New London also, but the conduct of Washington in the Highlands prevented it.

George Washington, John Habberton, p. 186.

The Freedom of a Private Gentleman

The evening of the ball had arrived. The old Manor house of the Penn family, at Bush Hill—then a short distance beyond the suburbs of the city—was untenanted, save by an aged negro couple whose business it was to keep the house and grounds in some kind of order, and was chosen as the scene of the festivities. A number of French officers

had come on to Philadelphia to pay their respects to Congress—taking advantage of the curious inactivity which characterized the campaign of 1779; and as the Philadelphia of that time, notwithstanding the Quaker element in society, was greatly devoted to pleasure-seeking, this ball had been devised as a means of showing them honor, and promoting the good feeling between the two nations.

Washington also had arrived, and would be present. The commander-in-chief did not altogether approve of the mirth and feasting which was so much the order of the day in the Quaker city, but he was very anxious that every kindness and respect should be shown to the French officers. Especially was he anxious that it should be done at this time, when the unfortunate affair of Rhode Island still rankled in the popular mind, and tended to reawaken those feelings of dislike and contempt for the French, which had grown up through the animosities of many centuries.

There was a large and gay party assembled at the manor-house of Springettsbury that evening. The mansion itself was brilliantly illuminated with wax candles and lustres, and adorned with mirrors and paintings and statues, and the intermingled flags of France and the United States; while the extensive grounds attached to the house, with their gravel walks and evergreen arbors and wilderness of shade, including thick groves of cedars and catalpas, were lighted up with Chinese lanterns for the enjoyment of promenaders. Nearly a hundred French and American officers were present, and a still larger number of civilians, including members of the Continental Congress, and other gentlemen of high political and social repute. As we have said, Washington also was present, and the centre of admiring and venerating eyes.

The festivities commenced with a dance in honor of the alliance between the two countries. Pemberton and Isabella took part in this. It was a double quadrille—which dance the French officers had brought over with them, and which was just beginning to take the place of the more

ceremonious minuet. Four of the eight gentlemen were arrayed in the French, and four in the American military uniform; while four of the ladies wore blue, with American flowers in their hair, and four white, with green scarfs, and artificial *fleurs-de-lis*. The American officers dancing with the ladies that represented the French, and the French officers dancing with the ladies in blue.

Soon the Alliance Quadrille was over, and the couples engaged in it mingled with the rest of the company. And then Helen felt a touch on her arm, and turned to see Pemberton and Washington standing at her side.

"Allow me to present to your Excellency, Miss Helen Graham," said Pemberton. Helen made a deep courtesy.

"Shall I have the pleasure of dancing with you, Miss Helen?" said Washington; "I see they are waiting for me to lead off."

Helen signified her assent, and putting her gloved hand in the large, masculine one extended toward her, was led to the head of the principal set.

Helen was so excited that she could scarcely trust herself to speak. It seemed hardly regular. His Excellency many evidently thought, should have begun with Mrs. President Reed, and danced with some twenty other dowagers before ever thinking of the young ladies. But it was not a clear case of fascination and wilfulness. Washington revered the proprieties, although they were intolerably irksome to him at times. But, strictly speaking, this was not a ball in his honor—it was in honor of the French—and he merely attended as a private gentleman; therefore he was entitled to exercise the freedom of a private gentleman.

Pemberton, Henry Peterson, p. 264.

"Not Expedient to Expose the Highest Virtues to Such Temptations"

The . . . defects in the military system, were pressed by Washington upon the attention of Congress in a letter to the President: "It were devoutly to be wished,"

observed he, "that a plan could be devised by which everything relating to the army could be conducted on a general principle, under the direction of Congress. This alone can give harmony and consistency to our military establishment, and I am persuaded that it will be infinitely conducive to public economy."

In consequence of this letter it was proposed in Congress to send a committee of three of its members to headquarters to consult with the commander-in-chief, and, in conjunction with him, to effect such reforms and changes in the various departments of the army as might be deemed necessary. Warm debates ensued. It was objected that this would put too much power into a few hands, and especially into those of the commander-in-chief; "*that his influence was already too great; that even his virtues afforded motives for alarm; that the enthusiasm of the army joined to the kind of dictatorship already confided to him, put Congress and the United States at his mercy; that it was not expedient to expose a man of the highest virtues to such temptations.*"

Life of George Washington, Washington Irving, Vol. IV, p. 58.

France acknowledges United States independence

February 6, 1778

British evacuation of Philadelphia.... June 18, 1778

Battle of Monmouth..... June 28, 1778

Indian massacre at Wyoming, Pennsylvania,

July 3, 1778

Indian outrages at Cherry Valley, N. Y., Nov. 11, 1778

British capture Savannah,..... December 29, 1778

CHAPTER XXIV

"NOT WORTH A CONTINENTAL !"

Story of Stony Point by a Participant

General Washington had planned an enterprise against the posts at King's Ferry, comprehending a double attack, to be made at the same time, on both. But the difficulty of a perfect co-operation of detachments, incapable of communicating with each other, determined him to postpone the attack on Verplanck's, and to make that part of the plan dependent on the success of the first. His whole attention therefore was turned to Stony Point; and the troops destined for this critical service proceeded on it as against a single object.

The execution of the plan was entrusted to General Wayne, who commanded the light infantry of the army. Secrecy was deemed so much more essential to success than numbers, that no addition was made to the force already in the lines. One brigade was ordered to commence its march, so as to reach the scene of action in time to cover the troops engaged in the attack, should any unlooked for disaster befall them, and Major Lee of the light dragoons, who had been eminently useful in obtaining the intelligence which led to the enterprise, was associated with General Wayne, as far as cavalry could be employed in such a service. The night of the fifteenth, and the hour of twelve, were chosen for the assault.

Stony Point is a commanding hill, projecting far into the Hudson, which washes three-fourths of its base. The remaining fourth is, in a great measure, covered by a deep marsh, commencing near the river, and continuing into it below. Over this marsh there is only one crossing place;

but at its junction with the river, is a sandy beach, passable at low tide. On the summit of this hill stood the fort, which was furnished with heavy ordnance. Several breast-works and strong batteries were advanced in front of the main work; and, about half way down the hill were two rows of abatis. The batteries were calculated to command the beach and the crossing place of the marsh, and to rake and enfilade any column which might be advancing from either of those points towards the fort. In addition to these defenses, several vessels of war were stationed in the river, and commanded the ground at the foot of the hill. The garrison consisted of about six hundred men, commanded by Colonel Johnson.

General Wayne arrived about eight in the afternoon at Spring Steel's, one and a half miles from the fort; and made his dispositions for the assault.

It was intended to attack the works on the right and left flanks at the same instant. The regiments of Febiger and of Meigs, with Major Hull's detachment, formed the right column; and Butler's regiment, with two companies under Major Murfree, formed the left. One hundred and fifty volunteers, led by Lieutenant Colonel Fleury and Major Posey, constituted the van of the right; and one hundred volunteers under Major Stewart, composed the van to the left. At half past eleven the two columns moved to the assault, the van of each with unloaded muskets and fixed bayonets. They were each preceded by a forlorn hope of twenty men, the one commanded by Lieutenant Gibbon, and the other by Lieutenant Knox. They reached the marsh undiscovered; and at twenty minutes after twelve, commenced the assault.

Both columns rushed forward under a tremendous fire. Surmounting every obstacle, they entered the works at the point of the bayonet; and, without discharging a single musket, obtained possession of the fort.

The humanity displayed by the conquerors was not

less conspicuous, nor less honorable than their courage. Not an individual suffered after resistance had ceased.

All the troops engaged in this perilous service manifested a degree of ardor and impetuosity, which proved them to be capable of the most difficult enterprises; and all distinguished themselves, whose situation enabled them to do so. Colonel Fleury was the first to enter the fort and strike the British standard. Major Posey mounted the works almost at the same instant, and was the first to give the watch-word—“The fort’s our own.”—Lieutenants Gibbon and Knox performed the service allotted to them with a degree of intrepidity which could not be surpassed. Of twenty men who constituted the party of the former, seventeen were killed or wounded.

Sixty-three of the garrison were killed, including two officers. The prisoners amounted to five hundred and forty-three, among whom were one lieutenant-colonel, four captains, and twenty subaltern officers. The military stores taken in the fort were considerable.

The loss sustained by the assailants was not proportioned to the apparent danger of the enterprise. The killed and wounded did not exceed one hundred men; General Wayne, who marched with Febiger’s regiment in the right column, received a slight wound in the head which stunned him for the time, but did not compel him to leave the column. Being supported by his aids, he entered the fort with the regiment.

The Life of George Washington. John Marshall, Vol. I, p. 310.

A Recent Account of the Capture of Stony Point

At Stony Point and Verplanck’s Point were the southern outposts of the defenses of the Hudson River Highlands, and, consequently, of the only available roads between New England and the colonies. On the last day of spring Sir Henry Clinton, with seventy ships and about five thousand men, appeared before these posts and proceeded to

surround them. On one point was a finished fort, and on the other an unfinished one, which was abandoned by its garrison of thirty men. Fort Lafayette, on Verplanck's Point, was bombarded from the opposite side of the river, cannonaded by the fleet, and approached by a large land force, so, quite naturally, the garrison, consisting of only seventy men, surrendered. Both forts were greatly strengthened and strongly garrisoned by the British, and they were the most undesirable neighbors Washington had ever known, for not far above them were the only remaining defenses of the line of communication between the two sections of the colonies. Besides, the country needed a change from the dismal succession of depressing events that had occurred, so Washington resolved to capture the two forts. It may be well to remind the reader, at this point, that, although Washington is supposed to have been the embodiment of caution, the brilliant and desperate dashes by which his army from time to time distinguished itself were all of his own devising. So able was he at this apparently uncongenial work that Wayne, who was the standard authority on desperate operations, said he would "storm hell" if Washington would only plan the affair. In view of much subsequent and unprofitable discussion, it is to be regretted that the commander-in-chief did not act on Wayne's hint.

The portion of Stony Point on which the fort stood, jutted far out into the Hudson and was so nearly surrounded by water that it could be approached by a narrow bridge. The works themselves, completed and greatly strengthened by the British, abounded in heavy guns, abatis, ditches, and other reprehensible things devised especially to discourage American visitors; it also contained six hundred British soldiers. Wayne, with three hundred infantry, was sent to surprise and capture the fort, another body of troops being sent down on the eastern bank of the river to make an attempt on the fort at Verplanck's Point. Washington

ordered that the assault of Stony Point be made at midnight, the hour before dawn having already become so common for such affairs that there was no possibility of a surprise party surprising.

Wayne was successful in every particular, even to that of getting so severe a rap on the head from a musket-ball that he made a small dying speech on suspicion. About one-third of his men were killed or wounded, but the remainder took in charge nearly three times their own number of the enemy. At daybreak he taught the British ships how it felt to be peppered by their own artillery, but they enjoyed it so little that they made haste to depart.

The movement on the other side of the river failed, and as the British had inconsiderately fortified Stony Point in such a way that it could be of no use to any one but themselves, the post was finally abandoned, but not before news of its capture had flown all over the country, as it afterward did over the civilized world. Foreign soldiers still talk of Wayne's dash as one of the most daring and successful recorded in military history. As for Clinton, he assumed that the operation meant that Washington was moving down the river to fight, so he hastened up to meet him, but was obliged to return to New York a wiser and a sadder man, for Washington never fought until entirely ready.

George Washington, John Habberton, p. 187.

"Light-horse Harry" Takes Paulus Hook

But Stony Point could not be held. The patriots had to abandon it again to Clinton within three or four days. The taking of it had been inspiring, and brought Tryon back from his raid into Connecticut; but it was not of permanent value. No real headway could be made against Clinton's wearing-out policy.

About a month after the taking of Stony Point, Light-horse Harry Lee, of Virginia, the father of Robert E. Lee,

of the Civil War, attacked in the same way the fort on Paulus Hook, which was a spit or isthmus of sand at the present site of Jersey City. He got into the fort and took one hundred and fifty prisoners, but was obliged instantly to abandon it, because the British were coming to the rescue from New York.

The True History of the American Revolution, Sydney George Fisher, p. 384.

To Suffer Was the Lot of the Revolutionary Soldier

The dreary encampment at Valley Forge has become proverbial for its hardships; yet they were scarcely more severe than those suffered by Washington's army during the present winter, while hutted among the heights of Morristown. The winter set in early, and was uncommonly rigorous. The transportation of supplies was obstructed; the magazines were exhausted, and the commissaries had neither money nor credit to enable them to replenish them. For weeks at a time the army was on half allowance; sometimes without meat, sometimes without bread; sometimes without both. There was a scarcity, too, of clothing and blankets, so that the poor soldiers were starving with cold as well as hunger.

Washington wrote to President Reed of Pennsylvania, entreating aid and supplies from that State to keep his army from disbanding. "We have never," said he, "experienced a like extremity at any period of the war."

The year 1780 opened upon a famishing camp. "For a fortnight past," writes Washington, on the 8th of January, "the troops, both officers and men, have been almost perishing with want. "Yet," adds he, feelingly, "they have borne their sufferings with a patience that merits the approbation, and ought to excite the sympathies, of their countrymen."

The severest trials of the Revolution, in fact, were not in the field, where there were shouts to excite and laurels to be won; but in the squalid wretchedness of ill-provided

camp, where there was nothing to cheer and everything to be endured. To suffer was the lot of the revolutionary soldier.

Life of George Washington, Washington Irving, Vol. IV, p. 21.

Welcome News from Lafayette

At this gloomy crisis came a letter from the Marquis de Lafayette, dated April 27th, announcing his arrival at Boston. Washington's eyes, we are told, were suffused with tears as he read this most welcome epistle, and the warmth with which he replied to it, showed his affectionate regard for this young nobleman. "I received your letter," writes he, "with all the joy that the sincerest friendship could dictate, and with that impatience which an ardent desire to see you could not fail to inspire.

I most sincerely congratulate you on your safe arrival in America, and shall embrace you with all the warmth of an affectionate friend when you come to headquarters, where a bed is prepared for you."

Life of George Washington, Washington Irving, Vol. IV, p. 61.

Speaking of His Personal Appearance

Speaking of his personal appearance he [Marquis de Chastellux] writes: "His form is noble and elevated, well-shaped and exactly proportioned; his physiognomy mild and agreeable, but such, that one does not speak in particular of any one of his traits; and that in quitting him there remains simply the recollection of a fine countenance. His air is neither grave nor familiar; one sees sometimes on his forehead the marks of thought, but never of inquietude; while inspiring respect he inspires confidence, and his smile is always that of benevolence.

"Above all, it is interesting," continues the marquis, "to see him in the midst of the general officers of his army. General in a republic, he has not the imposing state of a marshal of France who gives the *order*; hero in a republic,

he excites a different sort of respect, which seems to originate in this sole idea, that the welfare of each individual is attached to his person."

He sums up his character in these words: "Brave without temerity; laborious without ambition; generous without prodigality; noble without pride; virtuous without severity; he always seems to stop short of that limit, where the virtues, assuming colors more vivid, but more changeable and dubious, might be taken for defects."

Life of George Washington, Washington Irving, Vol. IV, p. 217.

An Invitation to Dine at Headquarters

He saw very clearly that while the separate States were looking after their several affairs, the Congress which represented the whole country was losing its influence and power. "I think our political system," he wrote; "may be compared to the mechanism of a clock, and that we should derive a lesson from it; for it answers no good purpose to keep the smaller wheels in order, if the greater one, which is the support and prime mover of the whole, is neglected."

He was indignant at the manner in which congressmen, and others who were concerned in the affairs of the country, spent their time in Philadelphia. "An assembly," he said, "a concert, a dinner, a supper, that will cost three or four hundred pounds, will not only take off men from acting in this business, but even from thinking of it; while a great part of the officers of our army, from absolute necessity, are quitting the service; and the more virtuous few, rather than do this, are sinking by sure degrees into beggary and want." How simply he himself lived may be seen by the jocular letter which he wrote to a friend, inviting him to dine with him at headquarters. The letter is addressed to Dr. Cochran, surgeon-general in the army:

"*Dear Doctor*.:—I have asked Mrs. Cochran and Mrs. Livingston to dine with me to-morrow; but am I not in honor bound to apprise them of their fare? As I hate

deception, even where the imagination only is concerned, I will. It is needless to premise that my table is large enough to hold the ladies. Of this they had ocular proof yesterday. To say how it is usually covered is rather more essential; and this shall be the purport of my letter.

"Since our arrival at this happy spot, we have had a ham, sometimes a shoulder of bacon, to grace the head of the table; a piece of roast beef adorns the foot; and a dish of beans or greens, almost imperceptible, decorates the centre. When the cook has a mind to cut a figure, which I presume will be the case to-morrow, we have two beefsteak pies, or dishes of crabs, dividing the space, to about six feet, which without them, would be near twelve feet apart. Of late he has had the surprising sagacity to discover that apples will make pies; and it is a question if, in the violence of his efforts, we do not get one of apples, instead of having both of beefsteaks. If the ladies can put up with such entertainment, and will submit to partake of it on plates once tin but now iron (not become so by the labor of scouring), I shall be happy to see them; and am, dear Doctor, yours,"

[G. WASHINGTON].

George Washington, an Historical Biography, Horace E. Scudder, p. 194.

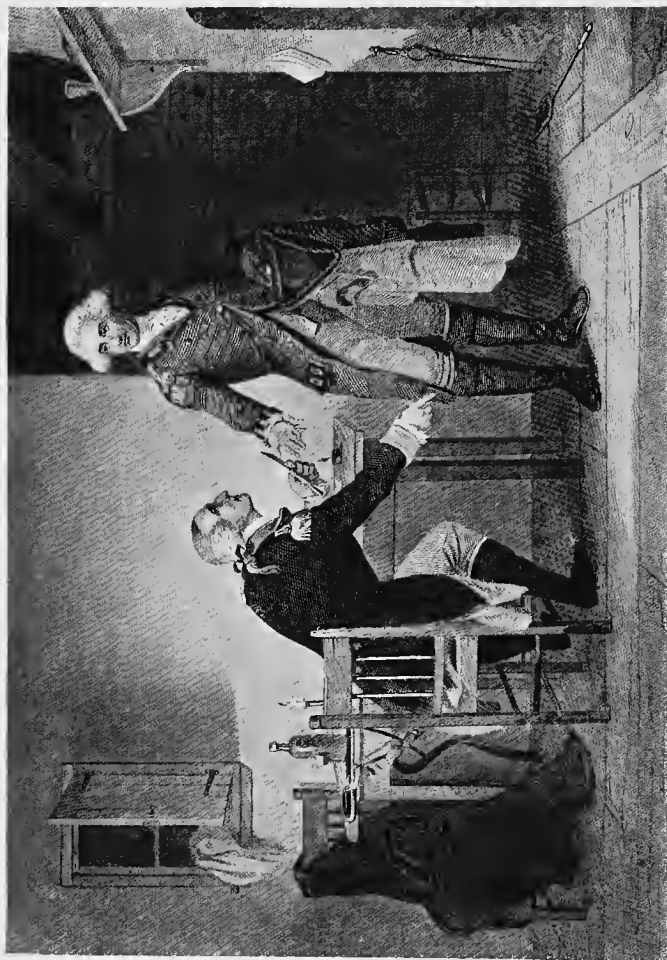
A Continental System of "Donation Parties"

During the summer of 1780 this wretched "Continental" currency fell into contempt. As Washington said, it took a wagon load of money to buy a wagon load of provisions. At the end of the year 1778, the paper dollar was worth sixteen cents in the northern States and twelve cents in the South. Early in 1780 its value had fallen to two cents, and before the end of the year it took ten paper dollars to make a cent. In October, Indian corn sold wholesale in Boston for \$150 a bushel, butter was \$12 a pound, tea \$90, sugar \$10, beef \$8, coffee \$12, and a barrel of flour cost \$1,575. Samuel Adams paid \$2,000 for a hat and a suit of clothes. The money soon ceased to circulate, debts could not be collected,

and there was a general prostration of credit. To say that a thing was "not worth a Continental" became the strongest possible expression of contempt. A barber in Philadelphia papered his shop with bills, and a dog was led up and down the streets, smeared with tar, with this unhappy money all over him,—a sorry substitute for the golden-fleeced sheep of the old Norse legend. Save for the scanty pittance of gold which came in from the French alliance, from the little foreign commerce that was left, and from trade with the British army itself, the country was without any circulating medium. In making its requisitions upon the States, Congress resorted to a measure which reminds one of the barbaric ages of barter. Instead of asking for money, it requested the States to send in their "specific supplies" of beef and pork, flour and rice, salt and hay, tobacco and rum. The finances of what was so soon to become the richest of nations were thus managed on the principle whereby the meager salaries of country clergymen used to be eked out. It might have been called a Continental system of "donation parties."

The American Revolution, John Fiske, Vol. II, p. 198.

General Anthony Wayne's brilliant capture of Stony Point	July 15, 1779
British forces take possession of Georgia.....	1779
Captain John Paul Jones's great naval victory, off Flamborough Head, England, Sept. 23,	1779



From the Painting by C. F. Blauvelt.

ARNOLD URGES ANDRE TO HIDE THE MESSAGE IN HIS BOOT

CHAPTER XXV

GENERAL ARNOLD AND MAJOR ANDRÉ

Benedict Arnold, before the Great Treason

Early in the spring there fell to Washington the very unpleasant task of reprimanding Benedict Arnold, in compliance with the finding and sentence of a court-martial. The heinous and shameful nature of Arnold's subsequent crime has almost entirely deprived the rascal of any credit for previous services; but the truth is, that he was an able, patriotic soldier, fertile in expedient, brave in action, untiring in effort, hopeful under disaster, and unselfish in his relations with his fellow soldiers. It is also true that no other general officer, not even Schuyler, was so shamefully abused and so frequently and inexcusably kept for long periods of time in extreme indignation. In spite of all this, he might have retired from the army with honor, had monuments half finished to his memory, and been like Washington, godfather to innumerable post-towns, tug-boats, and baking-powders, had it not been for one fatal defect of character; he was a spendthrift. Most of the American officers who were not in good circumstances when the war began were necessarily in debt, but Arnold aggravated this undesirable condition by extravagance. For the honest debtor there is hope while life remains, but any kind of a scoundrel can be made of a spendthrift.

In the unrelieved, steadily increasing misery of his financial condition, Arnold's manner became offensive. As military governor of Philadelphia he was ostentatious, and some of his actions and accounts were irregular enough to excite suspicion, but the evidence adduced by the State of Pennsylvania, which instigated the trial by court-martial

proves scarcely anything except that Pennsylvanians disliked Arnold.

The reprimand administered by Washington was, like almost all his other utterances in trying circumstances, a proof of the delicacy and nobility of the commander-in-chief's nature. It was as follows: "Our profession is the chastest of all; even the shadow of a fault tarnishes the luster of our finest achievements. The least inadvertence may rob us of public favor, so hard to be acquired. I reprehend you for having forgotten that, in proportion as you had rendered yourself formidable to our enemies, you should have been guarded and temperate in your deportment toward your fellow-citizens. Exhibit anew those noble qualities which have placed you on the list of our most valued commanders. I will myself furnish you, as far as may be in my power, with opportunities of regaining the esteem of your country."

George Washington, John Habberton, p. 198.

"The Army They Will Never Conquer"

The story of Arnold's treason is easily told. Its romantic side has made it familiar to all Americans, and given it a factitious importance. Had it succeeded it would have opened vast opportunities of disaster to America. It failed, and had no result whatever. It has passed into history simply as a picturesque episode, charged with possibilities which fascinate the imagination, but having, in itself, neither meaning nor consequences beyond the two conspirators. To us it is of interest, because it shows Washington in one of the sharpest and bitterest experiences of his life. Let us see how he met it and dealt with it.

From the day when the French landed, both De Rochambeau and Washington had been most anxious to meet. The French general had been particularly urgent, but it was difficult for Washington to get away. As he wrote on October 21st:

"We are about ten miles from the enemy. Our popular government imposes a necessity of great circumspection. If any misfortune should happen in my absence, it would be attended with every inconvenience. I will, however, endeavor, if possible, and as soon as possible, to meet you at some convenient rendezvous."

In accordance with this promise, a few weeks later, he left Greene in command of the army, and, not without misgivings, started on September 18th to meet De Rochambeau. On his way he had an interview with Arnold, who came to him to show a letter from the loyalist Colonel Robinson, and thus disarm suspicion as to his doings. On the 20th, the day when André and Arnold met to arrange the terms of the sale, Washington was with De Rochambeau at Hartford. News had arrived, meantime, that De Guichen had sailed for Europe; the command of the sea was therefore lost, and the opportunity for action had gone by. There was no need for further conference, and Washington accordingly set out on his return at once, two or three days earlier than he had intended.

He was accompanied by his own staff, and by Knox and Lafayette with their officers. With him, too, went the young Count Dumas, who has left a description of their journey, and of the popular enthusiasm displayed in the towns through which they passed. In one village, which they reached after nightfall, all the people turned out, the children bearing torches, and men and women hailed Washington as father, and pressed about him to touch the hem of his garments. Turning to Dumas he said, "We may be beaten by the English; it is the chance of war; but there is the army they will never conquer." Political leaders grumbled, and military officers caballed, but the popular feeling went out to Washington with a sure and utter confidence. The people in that little village recognized the great and unselfish leader as they recognized Lincoln a century later, and from the masses of the people no one ever

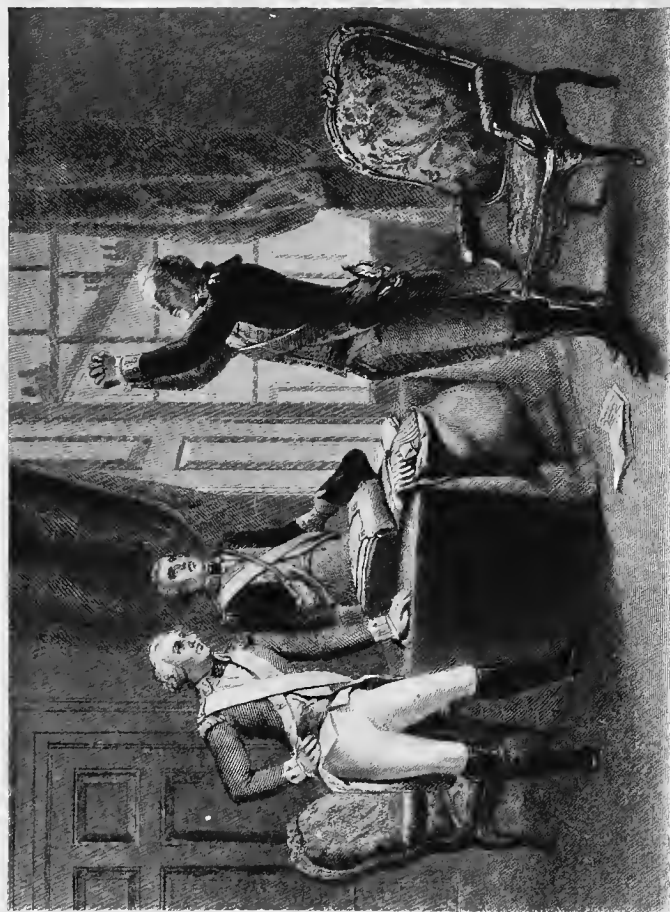
heard the cry that Washington was cold or unsympathetic. They loved him, and believed in him, and such a manifestation of their devotion touched him deeply. His spirits rose under the spell of appreciation and affection, always so strong upon human nature, and he rode away from Fishkill the next morning at daybreak with a light heart.

George Washington, Henry Cabot Lodge Vol. I p. 273.

"Whom Can We Trust Now?"

The company was pleasant and lively, the morning was fair, and as they approached Arnold's headquarters at the Robinson house, Washington off to the redoubts by the river, telling the young men that they were all in love with Mrs. Arnold and would do well to go straight on and breakfast with her. Hamilton and McHenry followed his advice, and while they were at breakfast a note was brought to Arnold. It was a letter of warning from André announcing his capture, which Colonel Jameson, who ought to have been cashiered for doing it, had forwarded. Arnold at once left the table, and saying that he was going to West Point, jumped into his boat and was rowed rapidly down the river to the British man-of-war. Washington on his arrival was told that Arnold had gone to the fort, and so after a hasty breakfast he went over there himself. On reaching West Point no salute broke the stillness, and no guard turned out to receive him. He was astonished to learn that his arrival was unexpected, and that Arnold had not been there for two days. Still unsuspecting he inspected the works and then returned.

Meantime, the messenger sent to Hartford with the papers taken on André reached the Robinson house and delivered them to Hamilton, together with a letter of confession from André himself. Hamilton read them, and hurrying out met Washington just coming up from the river. He took his chief aside, said a few words to him in a low voice, and they went into the house together. When they came



"WHOM CAN WE TRUST NOW?"

out, Washington looked as calm as ever, and calling to Lafayette and Knox gave them the papers, saying simply, "Whom can we trust now?" He dispatched Hamilton at once to try to intercept Arnold at Verplanck's Point, but it was too late; the boat had passed, and Arnold was safe on board the *Vulture*. This done, Washington bade his staff sit down with him to dinner, as the general was absent, and Mrs. Arnold was ill in her room. Dinner over, he immediately set about guarding the post, which had been so near betrayal. To Colonel Wade at West Point he wrote: "Arnold has gone to the enemy; you are in command, be vigilant." To Jameson he sent word to guard André closely. To the colonels and commanders of various outlying regiments he sent orders to bring up their troops. Everything was done that should have been done, quickly, quietly, and without comment. The most sudden and appalling treachery had failed to shake his nerve, or confuse his mind.

Yet the strong and silent man was wrung to the quick, and when everything possible had been done, and he had retired to his room, the guard outside the door heard him marching back and forth through all the weary night. The one thing he least expected, because he least understood it, had come to pass. He had been a good and true friend to the villain who had fled, for Arnold's reckless bravery and dare-devil fighting had appealed to the strongest passion of his nature, and he had stood by him always. He had grieved over the refusal of Congress to promote him in due order, and had interceded with ultimate success on his behalf. He had sympathized with him in his recent troubles in Philadelphia, and had administered the reprimand awarded by court-martial so that rebuke seemed turned to praise. He had sought to give him every opportunity that a soldier could desire, and had finally conferred upon him the command of West Point. He had admired his courage and palliated his misconduct, and now the

scoundrel had turned on him and fled. Mingled with the bitterness of these memories of betrayed confidence was the torturing ignorance of how far this base treachery had extended. For all he knew there might be a brood of traitors about him in the very citadel of America. We can never know Washington's thoughts at that time, for he was ever silent, but as we listen in imagination to the sound of the even footfalls which the guard heard all through that September night, we can dimly guess the feelings of that strong and passionate nature, wounded and distressed almost beyond endurance.

There is but little more to tell. The conspiracy stopped with Arnold. He had no accomplices, and meant to deliver the fort and pocket the booty alone. The British tried to spread the idea that other officers had been corrupted, but the attempt failed, and Washington's prompt measures of defense checked any movement against the forts. Every effort was made by Clinton to save André, but in vain. He was tried by a court composed of the highest officers in the American service, among whom was Lafayette. On his own statement, but one decision was possible. He was condemned as a spy, and as a spy he was sentenced to be hanged. He made a manly appeal against the manner of his death, and begged to be shot. Washington declined to interfere, and André went to the gallows.

George Washington, Henry Cabot Lodge, Vol. I, p. 275.

"He Wants Feeling"

The British, at the time, and some of their writers afterward, attacked Washington for insisting on this mode of execution, but there never was an instance in his career when he was more entirely right. André was a spy and briber, who sought to ruin the American cause by means of the treachery of an American general. It was a dark and dangerous game, and he knew that he staked his life on the result. He failed and paid the penalty. Washington could

not permit, he would have been grossly and feebly culpable if he had permitted, such an attempt to pass without extreme punishment. He was generous and magnanimous, but he was not a sentimentalist, and he punished this miserable treason, as far as he could reach it, as it deserved. It is true that André was a man of talent, well-bred and courageous, and of engaging manners. He deserved all the sympathy and sorrow which he excited at the time, but nothing more. He was not only technically a spy, but he had sought his ends by bribery, he had prostituted a flag of truce, and he was to be richly paid for his work. It was all hire and salary. No doubt André was loyal and patriotic. Many spies have been the same, and have engaged in their dangerous exploits from the highest motives. Nathan Hale, whom the British hanged without compunction, was as well-born and well-bred as André, and as patriotic as man could be, and moreover he was a spy and nothing more. André was a trafficker in bribes and treachery, and however we may pity his fate, his name has no proper place in the great temple at Westminster, where all English-speaking people bow with reverence, and only a most perverted sentimentality could conceive that it was fitting to erect a monument to his memory in this country.

Washington sent André to the gallows because it was his duty to do so, but he pitied him none the less, and whatever he may have thought of the means André employed to effect his end, he made no comment upon him, except to say that "he met his fate with that fortitude which was to be expected from an accomplished man and a gallant officer." As to Arnold he was almost equally silent. When obliged to refer to him he did so in the plainest and simplest way, and only in a familiar letter to Laurens do we get a glimpse of his feelings. He wrote:

"I am mistaken if at this time Arnold is undergoing the torment of a mental hell. He wants feeling. From some traits of his character which have lately come to my

knowledge, he seems to have been so hackneyed in villainy, and so lost to all sense of honor and shame, that, while his faculties will enable him to continue his sordid pursuits, there will be no time for remorse."

George Washington, Henry Cabot Lodge, Vol. 1, p. 279.

Intercedes in Vain for Major André

At last my friend returned. "The General will see you presently, Wynne, but it is a useless errand. Give me André's letter." With this he left me again, and I continued my impatient walk. In a quarter of an hour he came back. "Come," said he: "I have done my best, but I have failed as I expected to fail. Speak your mind freely; he likes frankness." I went after him, and in a moment was in the farther room and alone with the chief.

A huge fire of logs blazed on the great kitchen hearth, and at a table covered with maps and papers, neatly set in order, the General sat writing.

He looked up, and with quiet courtesy said, "Take a seat, Captain Wynne. I must be held excused for a little." I bowed and sat down while he continued to write.

His pen moved slowly, and he paused at times, and then went on apparently with the utmost deliberation. I was favorably placed to watch him without appearing to do so, his face being strongly lighted by the candles in front of him. He was dressed with his usual care, in a buff waistcoat and a blue-and-buff uniform, with powdered hair drawn back to a queue and carefully tied with black ribbon.

The face, with its light-blue eyes, ruddy cheeks, and rather heavy nose above a strong jaw, was now grave, and, I thought, stern. At least a half-hour went by before he pushed back his chair and looked up. . . .

"Captain Wynne," he said, "I have refused to see several gentlemen in regard to this sad business, but I learn that Mr. André was your friend, and I have not forgotten your aunt's timely aid at a moment when it was sorely

needed. For these reasons and at the earnest request of Captain Hamilton and the marquis, I am willing to listen to you. May I ask you to be brief?" He spoke slowly, as if weighing his words. "What can I do for you? As to this unhappy gentleman, his fate is out of my hands. I have read the letter which Captain Hamilton gave me." As he spoke he took it from the table and deliberately read it again, while I watched him. Then he laid it down and looked up. I saw that his big, patient eyes were overfull as he spoke.

"I regret, sir, to have to refuse this most natural request; I have told Mr. Hamilton that it is not to be thought of. Neither shall I reply. It is not fitting that I should do so, nor is it necessary or even proper that I assign reasons which must already be plain to every man of sense. Is that all?"

I said, "Your Excellency, may I ask but a minute more?"

"I am at your disposal, sir, for so long. What is it?"

I hesitated, and, I suspect, showed plainly in my face my doubt as to the propriety of what was most in my mind when I sought this interview. He instantly guessed that I was embarrassed, and said, with the gentlest manner and a slight smile:

"Ah, Mr. Wynne, there is nothing which can be done to save your friend, nor indeed to alter his fate; but if you desire to say more do not hesitate. You have suffered much for the cause which is dear to us both. Go on, sir."

Thus encouraged, I said, "If on any pretext the execution can be delayed a week, I am ready to go with a friend to enter New York in disguise, and to bring out General Arnold. I have been his *aide*, I know all his habits, and I am confident that we shall succeed if only I can control near New York a detachment of tried men. I have thought over my plan, and am willing to risk my life upon it."

"You propose a gallant venture, sir, but it would be

certain to fail; the service would lose another brave man, and I should seem to have been wanting in decision for no just or assignable cause."

I was profoundly disappointed; and in the grief of my failure I forgot for a moment the august presence which imposed on all men the respect which no sovereign could have inspired.

"My God! sir," I exclaimed, "and this traitor must live unpunished, and a man who did but what he believed to be his duty must suffer a death of shame!" Then half scared, I looked up, feeling that I had said too much. He had risen before I spoke, meaning, no doubt, to bring my visit to an end, and was standing with his back to the fire, his admirable figure giving the impression of greater height than was really his.

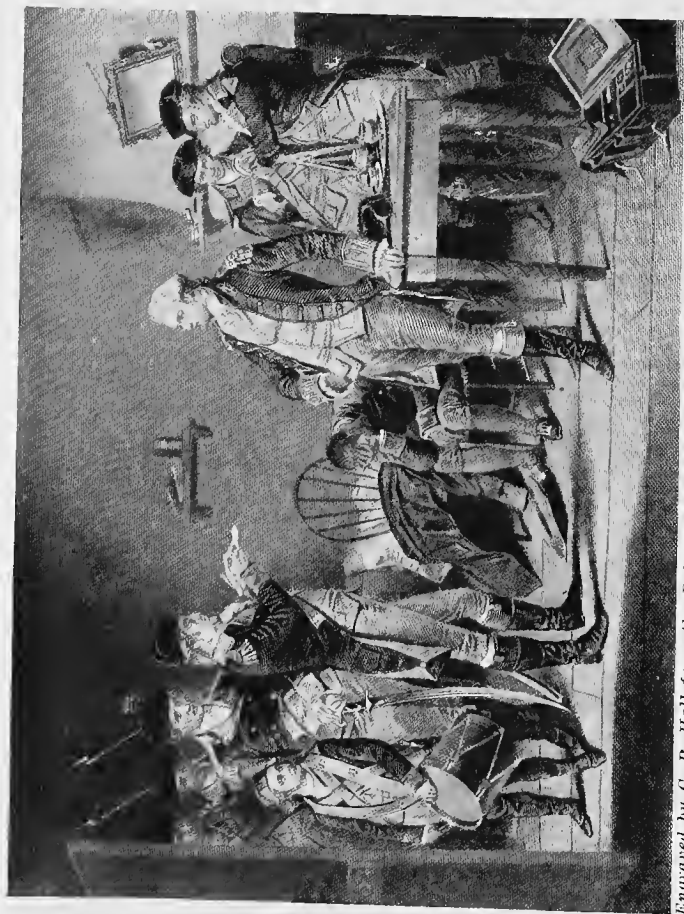
When, after my passionate speech, I looked up, having of course also risen, his face wore a look that was more solemn than any face of man I have ever yet seen in all my length of years.

"There is a God, Mr. Wynne," he said, "who punishes the traitor. Let us leave this man to the shame which every year must bring. Your scheme I cannot consider. I have no wish to conceal from you or from any gentleman what it has cost me to do that which, as God lives, I believe to be right. You, sir, have done your duty to your friend. And now may I ask of you not to prolong a too painful interview."

Hugh Wynne; Free Quaker, S. Weir Mitchell, M.D., LL.D., p. 462.

The Execution

The hour of noon had been appointed for Major André's execution. André rose from his bed at his usual hour, and after partaking of breakfast—which was supplied him as had been the custom, from Washington's own table—he began to make his preparations for the solemn scene. His servant, Laune, had arrived from New York some days



Engraved by G. R. Hall from the Painting by Alonzo Chappel.

ANDRE LISTENING TO HIS DEATH WARRANT

before with a supply of clothing; and André this morning shaved and dressed himself with more than his usual care. He wore the rich scarlet uniform, faced with green, of a British officer; though without the customary sash and sword.

Pemberton's heart was ready to burst, but he knew his duty to his friend too well to allow his sorrowful feelings to master him for a moment.

"To the brave, true soul, John, all that men can do is nothing. The heart right, and the conscience clear, as yours are, my friend, and we can say well-met to death, without a shudder." . . .

"Are you ready, Major?" said one of the officers.

"I am ready," replied André proudly.

As André emerged from the prison into the free, fresh air, he took a deep breath, and gazed up into the beautiful blue sky above him, hazy and golden with the glory he so much loved of an October day. He walked arm-in-arm between the two officers, Pemberton walking near him. A captain's command of thirty or forty men marched immediately around them, and André glanced expressively to Pemberton when he saw these, for he thought they were the firing party, and that his last request had been granted.

An outer guard of five hundred men also attended, at the head of which rode nearly all the principal officers of the army, with the exception of Washington and his staff, who from a feeling of delicacy remained in-doors. Large crowds of the soldiery, and of the citizens from the surrounding country, also were present.

As André passed on, he retained his composure in a wonderful degree—nodding and speaking pleasantly to those officers with whom he was acquainted; especially to those who had constituted the court-martial.

The gallows had been erected on the summit of an eminence that commanded a wide view of the surrounding country. It was also in full view of Washington's headquarters; but the doors and shutters of the latter were

closed, not a soul was to be seen, save the usual sentinels pacing in front of the house.

As the mournful procession turned from the high road into the meadow, André first saw the gallows. He suddenly recoiled, and paused for a moment.

"I thought you meant to spare me this indignity!" he exclaimed, almost passionately.

"We have simply to obey our orders," replied one of the officers.

André moved on. "I must drink the cup to the dregs, it seems," he said with deep emotion. "But it will soon be over." The pleasant smile, however, had vanished from his face. It was evident that what he thought a needless indignity cut sharper than the sentence of death itself.

The gallows was simply a rude but lofty gibbet, with a wagon drawn under it. Inside the wagon was a roughly-made coffin, painted black. As André stood near the wagon, awaiting some brief preparations, his agony seemed almost more than he could bear; his throat sinking and swelling as though convulsed, while he rolled a pebble to and fro under one of his feet. Laune, his servant, totally overcome, burst into loud weepings and lamentations. This seemed to rouse and restore his master, who turned to him, and uttered some cheering and comforting words. All around there were solemn faces, and many were even in tears.

At a word from one of the officers, André sprang lightly but with evident loathing into the baggage-wagon, standing upon the coffin. Then he looked around him—upon his executioner, with his blackened face; upon the saddened soldiery and the mournful crowd; upon the glorious landscape, resplendent with the hues of autumn, and melting gradually away into the hazy distance. Then the old, proud look came back into his face—and he seemed more like a hero, mounted in the car of triumph, and prepared to receive the acclamations of his followers, than a man about to suffer a shameful death.

The executioner approached him, but he waved him away with a grand disdain, and tossing his hat to the ground, removed his stock, opened his shirt-collar, and taking the noose, adjusted it himself properly about his neck.

The order of execution was read loudly and impressively by Adjutant-general Scammel. At its conclusion, Colonel Scammel informed the prisoner that he might speak, if he had anything to say.

Lifting the bandage from his eyes, and gazing around once more, as if that last look of earth and sun and sky and human faces was sweet indeed, André said in a proud, clear voice:

"Bear witness, gentlemen, that I die in the service of my country, as becomes a British officer and a brave man."

The hangman now drew near with a piece of cord to bind his arms; but, recoiling from its snaky touch, André swept his hand aside, and drawing another handkerchief from his pocket, allowed his elbows to be loosely fastened behind his back. Then he said in a firm voice—"I am ready!"

Almost at the word, the wagon was rolled swiftly away, and, with a terrible jerk and shock, the noble soul of John André was severed from the beautiful frame with which the Creator had clothed it.

Pemberton, Henry Peterson p. 376.

No Patriot Would Perform the Task

Crowds of people from all the country round—men, women, and children—came to see him die. Most of them would have torn Arnold limb from limb, but they were weeping over André. Everything he did charmed them; the touching letter he wrote to Washington asking to be shot instead of hanged; the outline of his beautiful slender figure as he stood upon the gallows; his arranging with his own hands the noose around his neck and turning down his collar. No patriot could be found who would perform the task of

executioner. They had to procure one of the half-way loyalist breed, who blackened his face and disguised himself, so that he could never again be recognized.

The True History of the American Revolution, Sydney George Fisher, page 403.

An English Poetess Prophesies against Washington

Remorseless Washington! the day shall come
Of deep repentance for this barbarous doom;
When injured André's memory shall inspire
A kindling army with resistless fire,
Each falchion sharper than the Britons wield,
And yield their fiercest lion to the field.
Then, when each hope of thine shall set in night,
When dubious dread and unavailing flight
Impel your host, thy guilt upbraided soul
Shall wish untouched the sacred life you stole.
And when thy heart appalled and vanquished pride
Shall vainly ask the mercy they denied,
With horror shalt thou meet the fate thou gave,
Nor pity gild the darkness of thy grave,
For infamy with livid hand shall shed
Eternal mildew on thy ruthless head.

General Washington and Major André, Charles J. Biddle, *The Historical Magazine*, Vol. 1, No. 7, July, 1857, p. 202.

An English Officer's View of the Case

He was tried by a board of general officers as a spy, and condemned to be hanged. The American general has been censured for directing this ignominious sentence to be carried into execution; but doubtless Major André was well aware when he undertook the negotiation, of the fate that awaited him should he fall into the hands of the enemy. The laws of war award to spies the punishment of death. It would, therefore, be difficult to assign a reason why Major André should have been exempted from that fate



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ARNOLD AND HIS WIFE IN ENGLAND

to which all others are doomed under similar circumstances, although the amiable qualities of the man rendered the individual case a subject of peculiar commiseration.

Origin and Services of the Coldstream Guards, Col. MacKinnon, Vol. II, p. v.

Benedict Arnold's Reward

He was rewarded with a gift of at least £6315 in money, which was a fortune in those days. His wife was given a pension of five hundred pounds a year, and each of his children one hundred pounds a year. He had also a command in the British army with perquisites and opportunities. Although some of the Whigs avoided his company, he was well received by the Tory aristocracy and the king, and his family married into the peerage. He accomplished a large part of his ambition. Had he succeeded in surrendering West Point he would have no doubt been made a peer. His sons entered the British army, and his descendants still occupy positions of respectability in England, devoting themselves to the enlargement of the British dominion, which was the only cause their ancestor had at heart.

The True History of the American Revolution, Sydney George Fisher, p. 401

Charleston (S.C.) captured by the British, May 12, 1780
British victory at Camden (S. C.) August 16, 1780
Arnold's treachery at West Point September, 1780
Execution of André October, 1780
American victory at King's Mountain, October 7, 1780

CHAPTER XXVI

HELPLESSLY WATCHING THE WAR IN THE SOUTH

"Would to God They Were to End Here!"

The height reached by the troubles in the army and their menacing character, had, however, a good as well as a bad side. They penetrated the indifference and carelessness of both Congress and the States. Gentlemen in the confederate and local administrations and legislatures woke up to a realizing sense that the dissolution of the army meant a general wreck, in which their own necks would be in very considerable danger; and they also had an uneasy feeling that starving and mutinous soldiers were very uncertain in taking revenge. The condition of the army gave a sudden and piercing reality to Washington's indignant words to Mathews on October 4th:

"At a time when public harmony is so essential, when we should aid and assist each other with all our abilities, when our hearts should be open to information and our hands ready to administer relief, to find distrusts and jealousies taking possession of the mind and a party spirit prevailing affords a most melancholy reflection, and forebodes no good." The hoarse murmur of impending mutiny emphasized strongly the words written on the same day to Duane: "The history of the war is a history of false hopes and temporary expedients. Would to God they were to end here!"

The events in the South, too, had a sobering effect. The congressional general Gates had not proved a success. His defeat at Camden had been terribly complete, and his flight had been too rapid to inspire confidence in his capacity for recuperation. The members of Congress were thus led

to believe that as managers of military matters they left much to be desired; and when Washington, on October 11th, addressed to them one of his long and admirable letters on reorganization, it was received in a very chastened spirit. They had listened to many such letters before, and had benefited by them always a little, but danger and defeat gave this one peculiar point. They therefore accepted the situation, and adopted all the suggestions of the commander-in-chief. They also in the same reasonable frame of mind determined that Washington should select the next general for the Southern army. A good deal could have been saved had this decision been reached before; but even now it was not too late. October 14th, Washington appointed Greene to this post of difficulty and danger, and Greene's assumption of the command marks the turning-point in the tide of disaster, and the beginning of the ultimate expulsion of the British from the only portion of the colonies where they had made a tolerable campaign.

George Washington, Henry Cabot Lodge, Vol. I, p. 285.

A Combined Movement at the South

The failure to accomplish anything in the North caused Washington, as the year drew to a close, to turn his thoughts once more toward a combined movement at the South. In pursuance of this idea, he devised a scheme of uniting with the Spaniards in the seizure of Florida, and of advancing thence through Georgia to assail the English in the rear. De Rochambeau did not approve the plan and it was abandoned; but the idea of a southern movement was still kept steadily in sight. The governing thought now was, not to protect this place or that, but to cast aside everything else in order to strike one great blow which would finish the war. Where he could do this, time alone would show, but if one follows the correspondence closely, it is apparent that Washington's military instinct turned more and more toward the South.

In that department affairs changed their aspect rapidly. January 17th, Morgan won his brilliant victory at Cowpens, withdrew in good order with his prisoners, and united his army with that of Greene. Cornwallis was terribly disappointed by this unexpected reverse, but he determined to push on, defeat the combined American army, and then join the British forces on the Chesapeake. Greene was too weak to risk a battle, and made a masterly retreat of two hundred miles before Cornwallis, escaping across the Dan only twelve hours ahead of the enemy. The moment the British moved away, Greene recrossed the river and hung upon their rear. For a month he kept in their neighborhood, checking the rising of the Tories, and declining battle. At last he received reinforcements, felt strong enough to stand his ground, and on March 15th the battle of Guilford Court House was fought. It was a sharp and bloody fight; the British had the advantage, and Greene abandoned the field, bringing off his army in good order. Cornwallis on his part had suffered so heavily, however, that his victory was turned to ashes. On the 18th he was in full retreat, with Greene in hot chase, and it was not until the 28th that he succeeded in getting over the Deep River and escaping to Wilmington. Thence he determined to push on and transfer the seat of war to the Chesapeake. Greene, with the boldness and quickness which showed him to be a soldier of a high order, now dropped the pursuit and turned back to fight the British in detachments and free the southern States. There is no need to follow him in the brilliant operations which ensued, and by which he achieved this result. It is sufficient to say here that he had altered the whole aspect of the war, forced Cornwallis into Virginia within reach of Washington, and begun the work of redeeming the Carolinas.

George Washington, Henry Cabot Lodge, Vol. 1, p. 293.

“Mad Anthony” and the Mutiny

The year 1781 opened in the Continental Army with a practical temperance lecture. As there were no ladies

in camp to be called upon and to offer wine, the soldiers visited one another, and the Government dealt out extra whiskey. The liquor had not "aged"; indeed, nothing in this new country had a chance to grow old, except the soldiers' clothes and grievances. Under the excitement caused by too much stimulation, too little food and clothing, and a great deal of hair-splitting trickery on the part of their State, a portion of the Pennsylvania line turned out under arms, and, commanded only by their non-commissioned officers, started from near New York to march to Philadelphia and lay their grievances before Congress. Wayne, their rightful commander, reasoned with them, but they had heard something of the sort before. Then, without any supporting force but his own courage, he drew his pistols; this demonstration they suppressed with fixed bayonets, expressing in a single breath their entire willingness to kill him if he tried to prevent them from carrying out their plan. Wayne ordered out such Pennsylvanians as had not yet mutinied, but the insurgents coaxed these also to join the procession, and there was seen, for the first and last time in the world, several thousand soldiers marching in order with not a commissioned officer among them, every man desperate at bad treatment experienced but not one man willing to go over to the enemy.

Wayne lives in history as the hot-headed hero of Stony Point, but his greatest claim to fame was his admirable coolness during this mutiny. He sent mounted officers ahead to inform Congress what to expect; he sent others to prepare the country through which the party would march; he sent a well appointed provision train with the insurgents, so there should be no excuse for foraging and robbery by the way; he informed Washington of what had happened, and then he accompanied the insurgents, not as commander, and hardly knowing whether he was guest or prisoner. A mere soldier could not have done as Wayne did; the occasion demanded a patriot, so, as usual when such emergencies were felt, the patriot was there.

Washington, too, forgot for the moment that he was a soldier, and remembered that he was an American. He deprecated opposition, and begged Wayne "to labor with Congress for relief, for he feared an attempt to reduce them (the insurgents), by force "will either drive them to the enemy or dissipate them in such a manner that they will never be recovered." Then the commander-in-chief, who tried to make all ill-winds blow good, shrewdly hurried messengers off to New England to tell what had happened and to beg for money and supplies for the men who had not yet mutinied, and he succeeded so well as to obtain three months' pay for the New England troops.

Meanwhile the insurgents marched on, maintaining perfect order; their commander-in-chief was a sergeant-major who had deserted from the British, but he gave no indication of a desire to return to his old allegiance, yet, when Lafayette, General St. Clair and other officers visited the camp they were ordered away. This had the effect of keeping President Reed, of the Pennsylvania Legislature, from venturing into camp, although he, with a congressional committee, had advanced from Philadelphia to meet them.

The patriot cause was therefore in a very bad way, and the most serious apprehensions were being felt on both sides, when the British Commander,—bless him!—came to the rescue, as he and his predecessors often unconsciously did at just the critical moment. Sir Henry Clinton sent two messengers to the insurgents with flattering invitations. Not being an American he did not know any better; he supposed all private soldiers, like his own, were mercenaries. But the Pennsylvanians felt terribly insulted by the implication that because they were mutineers they might become traitors, they explained their position by handing the messengers over to Wayne, who afterward had them effectually hanged as spies, and when the General offered a hundred guineas to the board of sergeants for surrendering

the men, the money was declined on the ground that "it was not for the sake or through any expectation of reward, but for love of our country, that we sent the spies immediately to General Wayne; we do not consider ourselves entitled to any other reward, and do jointly agree to accept no other."

George Washington, John Habberton, p. 213.

Discontent in the Army and an Appeal for Money

General Washington who had been extremely chagrined at the issue of the mutiny in the Pennsylvania line, and who was now assured of the confidence to be placed in the fidelity of the eastern troops, who were composed of natives, determined, by strong measures, to stop farther progress of a spirit which threatened the destruction of the army, and ordered a detachment to march against the mutineers, and to bring them to unconditional submission. General Howe, who commanded this detachment, was instructed to make no terms with the insurgents while in a state of resistance; and, as soon as they should surrender, to seize a few of the most active leaders, and to execute them on the spot. These orders were promptly obeyed, and the Jersey mutineers returned to their duty.

In the hope of being more successful with the revolters of Jersey than he had been with those of Pennsylvania, Sir Henry Clinton offered them the same terms which had been proposed to the mutineers at Princeton; and General Robertson, at the head of three thousand men, was detached to Staten Island with the avowed purpose of crossing over into Jersey, and covering any movement which they might make towards New York. The emissary, being in the American interest, delivered his papers to the officer commanding at the first station to which he came. Other papers were dispersed among the mutineers; but the mutiny was crushed too suddenly to allow time for the operation of these propositions.

The vigorous measures taken in this instance were happily followed by such an attention on the part of the States, to the actual situation of the army, as checked the progress of discontent. Influenced by the representations of the commander-in-chief, they raised three months' pay in specie, which they forwarded to the soldiers, who received it with joy, considering it as evidence that their fellow citizens were not entirely unmindful of their sufferings.

Although the army was thus reduced to such extreme distress, the discontents of the people were daily multiplied by the contributions which they were required to make, and by the irritating manner in which those contributions were drawn from them. Every article for public use was obtained by impressment; and the taxes were either unpaid, or collected by coercive means. Strong remonstrances were made against this system; and the dissatisfaction which pervaded the mass of the community was scarcely less dangerous than that which had been manifested by the army.

To the judicious patriots throughout America, the necessity of giving greater powers to the federal government became every day more apparent; but the efforts of enlightened individuals were too feeble to correct that fatal disposition of power which had been made by enthusiasm uninstructed by experience.

To relieve the United States from their complicated embarrassments, a foreign loan seemed an expedient of indispensable necessity, and from France they hoped to obtain it. Congress selected Lieutenant Colonel Laurens, a gentleman whose situation in the family of the commander-in-chief had enabled him to take a comprehensive view of the military capacities and weakness of his country, for this interesting service; and instructed him also to urge the advantage of maintaining a naval superiority in the American seas. Before his departure, he passed some days at headquarters, and received from General Washington in

the form of a letter, the result of his reflections on the existing state of things.

In this paper he detailed the pecuniary embarrassments of the government, and represented, with great earnestness, the inability of the nation to furnish a revenue adequate to the support of the war. He dwelt on the discontents which the system of impressment had excited among the people, and expressed his fears that the evils felt in the prosecution of the war, might weaken the sentiments which began it.

From this state of things, he deduced the vital importance of an immediate and ample supply of money, which might be the foundation for substantial arrangements of finance, for reviving public credit, and giving vigor to future operations; as well as of a decided effort of the allied arms on the continent to effect the great objects of the alliance, in the ensuing campaign.

Next to a supply of money, he considered a naval superiority in the American seas as an object of the deepest interest.

To the United States, it would be of decisive importance, and France also might derive great advantages from transferring the maritime war to the coast of her ally.

The future ability of the United States to repay any loan which might now be obtained was displayed; and he concluded with assurances that there was still a fund of inclination and resource in the country, equal to great and continued exertions, provided the means were afforded of stopping the progress of disgust, by changing the present system, and adopting another more consonant with the spirit of the nation, and more capable of infusing activity and energy into public measures; of which a powerful succor in money must be the basis. "The people were discontented, but it was with the feeble and oppressive mode of conducting the war, not with the war itself."

"A Difference in a Moment of Passion"

"An unexpected change has taken place in my situation," writes Hamilton (Feb. 18, 1781). "I am no longer a member of the General's family. This information will surprise you, and the manner of the change will surprise you more. Two days ago the General and I passed each other on the stairs:—he told me he wanted to speak to me. I answered that I would wait on him immediately. I went below and delivered Mr. Tilghman a letter to be sent to the commissary, containing an order of a pressing and interesting nature.

"Returning to the General, I was stopped on the way by the Marquis de Lafayette, and we conversed together about a minute on a matter of business. He can testify how impatient I was to get back, and that I left him in a manner, which, but for our intimacy, would have been more than abrupt. Instead of finding the General, as is usual, in his room, I met him at the head of the stairs, where, accosting me in an angry tone, "Colonel Hamilton" (said he), "you have kept me waiting at the head of the stairs these ten minutes; I must tell you, sir, you treat me with disrespect." I replied without petulancy, but with decision, "I am not conscious of it, sir, but since you have thought it necessary to tell me so, we part." "Very well, sir," (said he) "if it be your choice," or something to this effect, and we separated. I sincerely believe my absence, which gave so much umbrage, did not last two minutes.

"In less than an hour after, Tilghman came to me in the General's name, assuring me of his great confidence in my abilities, integrity, usefulness, etc., and of his desire, in a candid conversation, to heal a difference which could not have happened but in a moment of passion."

Life of George Washington, Washington Irving, Vol. IV, p. 269.

"It Is out of My Power"

The winter passed quietly away, but as soon as the snow was off the ground in 1781, the Indians renewed their

ravages. Early in the winter Clark went to Virginia to try to get an army for an expedition against Detroit. He likewise applied to Washington for assistance. Washington fully entered into his plans, and saw their importance. He would gladly have rendered him every aid. But he could do nothing, because of the importance to which the central authority, the Continental Congress, had been reduced by the selfishness and supine indifference of the various states—Virginia among the number. He wrote Clark:

"It is out of my power to send any reinforcements to the westward. If the States would fill their continental battalions we should be able to oppose a regular and permanent force to the enemy in every quarter. If they will not, they must certainly take measures to defend themselves by their militia, however expensive and ruinous the system."

It was impossible to state with more straightforward clearness the fact that Kentucky owed the unprotected condition in which she was left, to the divided or States-right system of government that then existed; and that she would have had ample protection—and incidentally greater liberty—had the central authority been stronger.

The Winning of the West, Theodore Roosevelt, Vol. II, p. 115.

Disappointments and Cross Purposes

Washington heard frequently from Greene, and in reply sent sympathy which was all he had to offer. He strained a point, however, in favor of the South when he learned that Arnold was operating in southern Virginia; to capture this rascal he sent off Lafayette, with twelve hundred men, to co-operate with a French naval force that was to blockade the traitor at Norfolk and Portsmouth. Lafayette's march, which was unknown to any one, the beginning of the end, began on Washington's birthday; believers in coincidences should stick a pin here.

A fortnight later the entire French fleet left Newport,

the blockade having kindly been raised by Providence through the medium of a storm, and sailed for the Chesapeake to assist in the capture of Arnold and his large army. Two days afterward the British fleet started in pursuit, and the French were overtaken off the Virginia capes. A severe fight occurred; each fleet used up the other, and hurried off to make repairs, which was the leading industry of the two navies during the war.

The failure of the French fleet seems to have brought Washington nearer to discouragement than any other event of the war had done; he wrote Laurens, the new minister at Paris, that the affair was to be regretted because a successful blow in that quarter would probably have given a decisive turn to southern affairs, and saved Virginia much unnecessary expense, "because the world is disappointed at not seeing Arnold in gibbets; and, above all, because we stood in need of something to keep us afloat until the result of your mission was known; for be assured, my dear Laurens, that day does not follow night more certainly than it brings with it some additional proof of the impracticability of carrying on the war without the aids you were directed to solicit.

I give it decisively as my opinion that, without a foreign loan, our present force, which is but the remnant of an army, cannot be kept together this campaign, much less will it be increased and in readiness for another.

We can not transport provisions from the States in which they are assessed, to the army, because we cannot pay the teamsters." The situation was about that of the young man who starved to death because he had not a postage stamp to carry a letter asking aid of his father.

George Washington, John Habberton, p. 220.

A Letter Intended to be Intercepted

Meantime, Washington had written a letter to the Marquis de Lafayette, then in Virginia, which he caused to be intercepted. In the letter he remarked that he was

pleased with the probability that Earl Cornwallis would fortify either Portsmouth or Old Point Comfort, for, were he to fix upon Yorktown, from its great capabilities of defense, he might remain there snugly and unharmed, until a superior British fleet would relieve him with strong reinforcements, or embark him altogether.

This fated letter quieted the apprehensions of the British commander-in-chief as to the danger of his lieutenant, and produced those delays in the operations of Sir Henry that tended materially to the success of the allies and the surrender of Yorktown.

Recollections of Washington, by His Adopted Son, George Washington Parke Custis, p. 232.

"Your Duty, Young Man, Is Not to Talk, but to Obey!"

Washington wrote other similar letters. The bearer of one of these was a young Baptist clergyman, named Montagnie, an ardent Whig, who was directed by Washington to carry a despatch to Morristown. He directed the messenger to cross the river at King's Ferry, proceed by Haverstraw to the Ramapo clove, and through the pass to Morristown. Montagnie, knowing the Ramapo pass to be in possession of the cow-boys and other friends of the enemy, ventured to suggest to the commander-in-chief that the upper road would be the safest. "I shall be taken," he said, "if I go through the clove." "Your duty, young man, is not to talk, but to obey!" replied Washington, sternly enforcing his words by a vigorous stamp of his foot. Montagnie proceeded as directed, and, near the Ramapo pass, was caught. A few days afterward he was sent to New York, where he was confined in the Sugar-house, one of the famous provost prisons in the city. The day after his arrival, the contents of the despatches taken from him were published in *Rivington's Gazette* with great parade, for they indicated a plan of an attack upon the city. The enemy was alarmed thereby, and active preparations were put in

motion for receiving the besiegers. Montagnie now perceived why he was so positively instructed to go through the Ramapo pass, where himself and despatches were quite sure to be seized.

Pictorial Field-Book of the Revolution, Benson J. Lossing, Vol. I, p. 781.

Wondering What to Do and How to Do It

While Washington was wondering what to do and how to do it, his uncertainty was ended by information that the Count de Grasse, with a large fleet and army, was to leave the West Indies early in August and make for Chesapeake Bay. Then the commander's long suppressed uncertainty ended; he informed Lafayette (but scarcely any one else) of what to expect, and warned him not to let Cornwallis get into the Carolinas again—a warning that the young Frenchman heeded with a degree of industry and skill for which American historians have never given him credit. Then Washington, after making preparations that put the British and his own army under the impression that New York was to be attacked by the allied armies, moved his own and the French troops from the east to the west side of the Hudson River, frightened the enemy into their works on the Jersey shore, menaced Staten Island, and was more than half way to Philadelphia before Clinton realized that he had been out-generaled. The indignation of the British commander seems to have temporarily deprived him of his sense of honor and decency, for he allowed Benedict Arnold, whom Cornwallis would not have near him in Virginia, to go off to New London (Arnold's native city) and destroy it.

The City of Brotherly Love received Washington with characteristic hospitality, but greatly wondered what he came for. The only man whose curiosity was satisfied to any extent was Robert Morris, for Washington borrowed twenty thousand dollars of him to cheer the pockets of the scant two thousand men, shabby, uncomfortable, and



Marquis Lafayette



Count Rochambeau



Kosciuszko



Baron Steuben

FOUR FOREIGN CHAMPIONS OF LIBERTY

penniless, who were going farther south than they had ever been before. Three days after Washington's arrival, the citizens obtained a hint by the appearance of the little army, which was so skillfully expanded that in column it covered two miles of roadway. Fortunately the streets were dusty, so the rags and faded uniforms were not as noticeable as they might have been. On the following day Rochambeau's army passed through in gay attire and with plenty of martial music such as the natives had not heard since the British hurried away.

George Washington, John Habberton, p. 225.

"A Tempting Proposal to a Young General of Twenty-four"

The fleet of the Count de Grasse, consisting of twenty-eight sail of the line, and a due proportion of frigates, containing three thousand veteran troops under the Marquis de St. Simon, anchored in the Chesapeake on the thirtieth of August. The frigates were immediately employed in conveying the troops up the James river, where they were landed, and reinforced the army of Lafayette, who then commanded in Virginia. An instance of virtue and magnanimity that occurred at this period of our narrative adorns the fame and memory of Lafayette.

Upon the arrival of the French land and naval forces in our waters, their commander said to Lafayette:

"Now, marquis, now is your time; a wreath of never-fading laurel is within your grasp! Fame bids you seize it. With the veteran regiments of St. Simon, and your own continentals, you have five thousand; to these add a thousand marines, and a thousand seamen, to be landed from the fleet, making seven thousand good soldiers, which, with your militia, give you an aggregate exceeding ten thousand men. With these, storm the enemy's works while they are yet in an unfinished state, and before the arrival of the combined armies you will end the war, and acquire an immortal renown."

"Believe me, my dear sir," said the good Lafayette, during his visit in America, "this was a most tempting proposal to a young general of twenty-four, and who was not unambitious of fame by honest means; but insuperable reasons forbade me from listening to the proposal for a single moment. Our beloved General had intrusted to me a command far above my deserts, my age, or experience in war. From the time of my first landing in America, up to the campaign of 1781, I had enjoyed the attachment, nay, parental regard of the matchless chief. Could I then dare to attempt to pluck a leaf from the laurel, that was soon to bind his honored brow—the well-earned reward of long years of toils, anxieties, and battles? And, lastly, could I have been assured of success in my attack, from the known courage and discipline of the foe, that success must have been attended by a vast effusion of human blood."

Recollections of Washington, by His Adopted Son, George Washington Parke Custis, p. 233.

"Less Painful to Me if They Had Burnt My House"

The troops which Cornwallis intended to join had been sent in detachments to Virginia during the winter and spring. The first body had arrived early in January under the command of Arnold, and a general marauding and ravaging took place. A little later General Phillips arrived with reinforcements and took command. On May 13th, General Phillips died, and a week later Cornwallis appeared at Petersburg, assumed control, and sent Arnold back to New York.

Meantime Washington, though relieved by Morgan's and Greene's admirable work, had a most trying and unhappy winter and spring. He sent every man he could spare, and more than he ought to have spared, to Greene, and he stripped himself still further when the invasion of Virginia began. But for the most part he was obliged, from lack of any naval strength, to stand helplessly by and see

more British troops sent to the South, and witness the ravaging of his native State, without any ability to prevent it. To these grave trials was added a small one, which stung him to the quick. The British came up the Potomac, and Lund Washington, in order to preserve Mount Vernon, gave them refreshments, and treated them in a conciliatory manner. He meant well but acted ill, and Washington wrote:

"It would have been a less painful circumstance to me to have heard that, in consequence of your non-compliance with their request, they had burnt my house and laid the plantation in ruins. You ought to have considered yourself as my representative, and should have reflected on the bad example of communicating with the enemy, and making a voluntary offer of refreshments to them, with a view to prevent a conflagration."

George Washington, Henry Cabot Lodge, Vol. I, p. 295.

"If You Had Looked behind You at the Battle of Cowpens"

In a personal encounter with Colonel William Washington, cousin to the commander-in-chief, at the battle of Cowpens, Colonel Tarleton was severely wounded in the hand. According to Mrs. Ellet's "*Women of the Revolution*," this wound was twice made the point of severe wit by two American ladies, who were daughters of Colonel Montfort, of Halifax, North Carolina. Because of his cruel and resentful disposition he was most heartily despised by the republicans. The occasions were as follows: When Cornwallis and his army were at Halifax, on their way to Virginia, Tarleton was at the house of an American. In the presence of Mrs. Willie Jones (one of these sisters), Tarleton spoke of Colonel Washington as an illiterate fellow, hardly able to write his name.

"Ah, Colonel," said Mrs. Jones, "you ought to know better, for you bear on your person proof that he knows very well *how to make his mark!*"

At another time Tarleton was speaking sarcastically of Colonel Washington, in the presence of her sister, Mrs. Ashe.

"I would be happy to see Colonel Washington," he said, with a sneer. Mrs. Ashe instantly replied, "If you had looked behind you, Colonel Tarleton, at the battle of Cowpens, you would have enjoyed that pleasure."

Stung with this keen wit, Tarleton placed his hand on his sword. General Leslie, who was present, remarked, "Say what you please, Mrs. Ashe, Colonel Tarleton knows better than to insult a lady in my presence."

Recollections of Washington, by His Adopted Son, George Washington Parke Custis,
p. 252.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE STORMING OF YORKTOWN

"Gone to Catch Cornwallis in His Mouse-trap!"

As the army marched through the streets of Philadelphia, there was an outburst of exulting hope. The plan could no longer be concealed. Congress was informed of it, and a fresh light shone upon the people, already elated by the news of Greene's career of triumph. The windows were thronged with fair ladies, who threw sweet flowers on the dusty soldiers as they passed, while the welkin rang with shouts, anticipating the great deliverance that was soon to come. The column of soldiers, in the loose order adapted to its swift march, was nearly two miles in length. First came the war-worn Americans, clad in rough toggery, which eloquently told the story of the meager resources of a country without a government. Then followed the gallant Frenchmen, clothed in gorgeous trappings, such as could be provided by a government which at that time took three-fourths of the earnings of its people in unrighteous taxation. There was some parading of these soldiers before the President of Congress, but time was precious. Washington in his eagerness galloping on to Chester, received and sent back the joyful intelligence that Grasse had arrived in Chesapeake, and then the glee of the people knew no bounds. Bands of music played in the streets, every house hoisted its Stars and Stripes, and all the roadside taverns shouted success to the bold general. "Long live Washington!" was the toast of the day. "He has gone to catch Cornwallis in his mouse-trap!"

The American Revolution, John Fiske, Vol. II, p. 277.

Visits Mount Vernon after Six Years

Pushing on after the joyful news of the arrival of de Grasse had been received, Washington left the army to go by water from the Head of Elk, and hurried to Mount Vernon, accompanied by de Rochambeau. It was six years since he had seen his home. He had left it a Virginia colonel, full of forebodings for his country, with a vast and unknown problem awaiting solution at his hands. He returned to it the first soldier of his day, after six years of battle and trial, of victory and defeat, on the eve of the last and crowning triumph. As he paused on the well-beloved spot, and gazed across the broad and beautiful river at his feet, thoughts and remembrances must have come thronging to his mind which it is given to few men to know. He lingered there two days, and then pressing on, was in Williamsburg on the 14th, and on the 17th went on board the *Ville de Paris* to congratulate de Grasse on his victory, and to concert measures for the siege.

The meeting was most agreeable. All had gone well, all promised well, and everything was smiling and harmonious. Yet they were on the eve of the greatest peril which occurred in the campaign. Washington had managed to scrape together enough transports; but his almost unassisted labors had taken time, and delay followed. Then the transports were slow, winds and tides were uncertain, and there was further delay. The interval permitted de Grasse to hear that the British fleet had received reinforcements, and to become nervous in consequence. He wanted to get out to sea; the season was advancing, and he was anxious to return to the West Indies; and above all he did not wish to fight in the bay. He therefore proposed firmly and vigorously to leave two ships in the river, and stand out to sea with his fleet. The Yorktown campaign began to look as if it had reached its conclusion. Once again Washington wrote one of his masterly letters of expostu-

lation and remonstrance, and once more he prevailed, aided by the reasoning and appeals of Lafayette, who carried the message. De Grasse consented to stay, and Washington, grateful beyond measure, wrote him that "a great mind knows how to make personal sacrifice to secure an important general good." Under the circumstances, and in view of the general truth of this complimentary sentiment, one cannot help rejoicing that de Grasse had "a great mind."

George Washington, Henry Cabot Lodge, Vol. I, p. 306.

Jolly Knox Laughed Till His Fat Sides Shook

The general, attended by a numerous suite of American and French officers, repaired to Hampton, and thence on board the *Ville de Paris*, the French admiral's ship, lying at anchor in the chops of the capes, to pay their respects to the Count de Grasse, and consult with him as to their future operations.

On the American chief's reaching the quarter-deck, the admiral flew to embrace him, imprinting the French salute upon each cheek. Hugging him in his arms, he exclaimed, "*My dear little general!*" De Grasse was of lofty stature; but the term *petit* or small, when applied to the majestic and commanding person of Washington produced an effect upon the risible faculties of all present not to be described. The Frenchmen, governed by the rigid etiquette of the *ancien régime*, controlled their mirth as best they could; but our own jolly Knox, heedless of all rules, laughed, and that aloud, till his fat sides shook again.

Washington returned from this conference by no means satisfied with its result. The admiral was extremely restless at anchor while his enemy's fleet kept the sea; and having orders limiting his stay in the American waters to a certain and that not distant day, he was desirous of putting to sea to block up the enemy's fleet in the basin of New York, rather than to run the risk of being himself blockaded in the bay of the Chesapeake.

Washington urged de Grasse to remain, because his departure, he said, "by affording an opening for the succor of New York, which the enemy would instantly avail themselves of, would frustrate our brilliant prospects; and the consequence would be, not only the disgrace and loss of renouncing an enterprise, upon which the fairest expectations of the allies have been founded, after the most expensive preparations, but perhaps disbanding the whole army for want of provisions."

Recollections of Washington, by His Adopted Son George Washington Parke Custis,
p. 235.

Not to His Glass but to His Grave

The first headquarters of Earl Cornwallis were in the house of Mr. Secretary Nelson, a relative of the governor, and a gentleman attached to the royal cause. It was a very large and splendid brick mansion, and towering above the ramparts, afforded a fine mark for the American artillery, that soon riddled it, having learned from a deserter that it contained the British headquarters. His lordship remained in the house until his steward was killed by a cannon-ball while carrying a tureen of soup to his master's table.

The British general then removed his headquarters to the house of Governor Nelson, and finally to apartments excavated in the bank on the southern extremity of the town, where two rooms were wainscoted with boards, and lined with baize, for his accommodation. It was in that cavernous abode that the earl received his last letter from Sir Henry Clinton. It was brought by the honorable Colonel Cochran, who, landing from an English cutter on Cape Charles, procured an open boat, and threading his way, under cover of a fog, through the French fleet, arrived safely, and delivered his despatches. They contained orders for the earl to hold out to the last extremity, assuring him that a force of seven thousand men would be immediately embarked for his relief.

While taking wine with his lordship after dinner, the gallant colonel proposed that he should go up to the ramparts and take a look at the Yankees, and upon his return give Washington's health in a bumper. He was dissuaded from so rash a proceeding by every one at the table, the whole of the works being at that time in so ruinous a state that shelter could be had nowhere. The colonel however persisted, and gayly observing that he would leave his glass as his representative till his return, which would be quickly, away he went. Poor fellow, he did return, and that quickly, but he was borne in the arms of the soldiers, not to his glass, but to his grave.

Recollections of Washington, by His Adopted Son, George Washington Parke Custis, p. 244.

The Battle Wages

On the 14th we reached Williamsburg. The army rapidly came in by divisions, French and American. Before the 25th we had from the fleet cannon and intrenching-tools, and all our available force was to hand.

I can make clear in a few words the situation of the enemy. The peninsula of York lies between the James and the York rivers. On the south bank of the latter sits the little town of York. Seven redoubts surrounded it. The town was flanked right and left by deep ravines and creeks falling into the York river. Intrenchments, field-works, and abatis, with felled trees, lay to landward.

Gloucester Point, on the opposite shore of the river, was well fortified, and before it lay a small force of British war-ships, the channel being obstructed lower down by sunken vessels. The French fleet held the river below the town, and we the peninsula.

On the night of the 25th, after a brief visit to the fleet, our chief lay down in the open under a mulberry-tree with one of its roots for a pillow, and slept well, as was audible enough to us who lay at a distance.

That night his lordship abandoned his outworks and drew within the town. We seized these lines next day, losing Colonel Scammel, formerly of the staff, in whose amusing songs and gay talk our chief had used to take so much pleasure. On the 28th the armies marched twelve miles down the peninsula, and camped two miles from the town, driving in the pickets and some parties of horse.

By October 1, the weather being fine, we had completed a half-moon of intrenchments, resting at each wing on the river. Two advanced redoubts we threw up and were severely cannonaded, so as to interrupt the men at work.

His Excellency, somewhat anxious, came out of his tent, and calling Mr. Tilghman and me, who were writing, rode forth, followed by his faithful black Billy, whom we used to credit with knowing more of what went on than did we of the staff. Mr. Evans, a chaplain, was fain to see more of the war than concerned him, and came after us. As we approached, Billy, riding behind me, said as the cannon-shot went over us:

"Dem redcoats is p'intin' us mighty well."

Then a shot ricocheted, striking the ground in front and covering us with dust. Mr. Evans, who was standing by, and had now seen quite enough of it, said, "We shall all be killed," and then looked ruefully at his new beaver, well dusted and dirty.

"You had better carry that home to your wife and children," said the chief. "This is not the place for you, sir."

Neither was it much to my own liking, and I was not sorry when we rode back.

On the night of the 9th of October his Excellency put a match to the first gun, and for four days and nights a furious cannonade went on from both sides.

Late on the night of the 10th a monstrous smoke hung over the town. Now and then a gust of sea wind tore it apart, and through the rifts we saw the silver cup of the moon and the host of stars. We lay long on the

hillock. I suppose the hour and the mighty fates involved made us serious and silent. Far away seventy cannon thundered from our works, and the enemy's batteries roared their incessant fury of reply.

Hugh Wynne: Free Quaker, S. Weir Mitchell, M.D., LL.D., p. 400.

" Save Me, for I Have Been a Good Soldier "

At a given signal the detachments advanced to the assault. As the Americans were mounting the redoubt, Lieutenant-colonel Laurens, *aide-de-camp* to the commander-in-chief, appeared suddenly on their flank, at the head of two companies. Upon Major Fish hailing him with, " Why, Laurens, what brought you here?" the hero replied, " I had nothing to do at headquarters, and so came here to see what you all were about." Bravest among the brave, this Bayard of his age and country rushed with the foremost into the works, making with his own hand, Major Campbell, the British commandant, a prisoner-of-war. The cry of the Americans as they mounted to the assault was, " Remember New London." But here, as at Stony Point, notwithstanding the provocation to retaliate was justified by the inhuman massacres of Paoli and Fort Griswold, mercy, divine mercy, perched triumphantly on our country's colors.

Washington, during the whole of the siege, continued to expose himself to every danger. It was in vain his officers remonstrated. It was in vain that Colonel Cobb, his *aide-de-camp*, entreated him to come down from a parapet, whence he was reconnoitring the enemy's works, the shot and shells flying thickly around, and an officer of the New England line killed within a very few yards. During one of his visits to the main battery, a soldier of Colonel Lamb's artillery had his leg shattered by the explosion of a shell. As they were bearing him to the rear, he recognized the chief, and cried out, " God bless your excellency, save me if you can, for I have been a good soldier, and served under

you during the whole war." Sensibly affected by the brave fellow's appeal, the general immediately ordered him to the particular care of Doctor Craik. It was too late; death terminated his sufferings after an amputation was performed.

Recollections of Washington, by His Adopted Son, George Washington Park Custis,
p. 241.

"The Work is Done and Well Done."

On the 11th the second parallel was begun, and on the 14th the American batteries played on the two advanced redoubts with such effect that the breaches were pronounced practicable. Washington at once ordered an assault. The smaller redoubt was stormed by the Americans under Hamilton and taken in ten minutes. The other, larger and more strongly garrisoned, was carried by the French with equal gallantry, after a half an hour's fighting. During the assault Washington stood in an embrasure of the grand battery, watching the advance of the men. He was always given to exposing himself recklessly when there was fighting to be done, but not when he was only an observer. This night, however, he was much exposed to the enemy's fire. One of his *aides*, anxious and disturbed for his safety, told him that the place was perilous. "If you think so," was the quiet answer, "you are at liberty to step back." The moment was too exciting, too fraught with meaning, to think of peril. The old fighting spirit of Braddock's field was unchained for the last time. He would have liked to head the American assault, sword in hand, and as he could not do that he stood as near his troops as he could, utterly regardless of the bullets whistling in the air about him. Who can wonder at his intense excitement at that moment? Others saw a brilliant storming of two outworks, but to Washington the whole Revolution, and all the labor and thought and conflict of six years were culminating in the smoke and din on those redoubts, while out of the dust and

heat of the sharp quick fight success was coming. He had waited long, and worked hard, and his whole soul went out as he watched the troops cross the abatis and scale the works. He could have no thought of danger then, and when all was over he turned to Knox and said, "The work is done, and well done. Bring me my horse."

George Washington, Henry Cabot Lodge, Vol. I, p. 307.

The Surrender of Cornwallis

On the 17th of October, the Marquis Cornwallis having had a stomach full of fighting, and having failed of his schemes to get away across the York River, beat a parley, and after some discussion signed the articles of capitulation. The soldiers were to remain prisoners in Virginia and Maryland, the officers were to return to Europe upon parole. The beaten army at two on the 19th came down the road between the French and our lines, with the colors in their cases, and the bands playing a British march; for it is of the etiquette of such occasions that the captured army play none but their own tunes. Some wag must have chosen the air, for they marched by to the good old English music of "The World Turned Upside Down"; such must have seemed sadly the case to these poor devils.

As I was of the staff, I was privileged to see well this wonderful and glorious conclusion of a mighty strife. Our chief sat straight in the saddle, with a face no man could read, for in it was neither elation nor show of satisfaction, as the sullen ranks came near.

At the head of the line rode General O'Hara. He paused beside our chief and begged his Excellency to receive the excuses of my Lord Cornwallis, who was not well enough to be present, which no one believed nor thought a manly thing to do.

His Excellency bowed, trusted it was not very serious, but would not receive General O'Hara's sword. With quiet dignity he motioned him to deliver it to Major-general

Lincoln, who now had these grateful amends for the misfortune of having had to surrender his own good blade at Charleston.

After this the long array of chagrined and beaten men went by, and, returning to York, were put under guard.

Hugh Wynne: Free Quaker, S. Weir Mitchell, M.D., LL.D., p. 510.

The Crowning Glory of the War

At length, on the morning of the seventeenth, the thundering ceased, hour after hour passed away, and the most attentive ear could not catch another sound. What had happened? Can Cornwallis have escaped? To suppose he had fallen was almost too much to hope for. And now an intense anxiety prevails: every eye is turned toward the great southern road, and "the express! the express!" is upon every lip. Each hamlet and homestead pours forth its inmates. Age is seen leaning on his staff; women with infants at the breast; children with wondering eyes, and tiny hands outstretched—all, all, with breathless hopes and fears, await the courier's coming. Ay, and the courier rode with a red spur that day; but had he been mounted on the wings of the wind, he could scarcely have kept pace with the general anxiety.

At length there is a cry—"He comes! he comes!" and emerging from a cloud of dust, a horseman is seen at headlong speed. He plies the lash and spur; covered with foam, with throbbing flank, and nostril dilated to catch the breeze, the generous horse devours the road, while ever and anon the rider waves his cap, and shouts to the eager groups that crowd his way "Cornwallis is taken!"

And now arose a joyous cry that made the very welkin tremble. The Tories, amazed and confounded, slunk away to their holes and hiding-places, while the patriot Whigs rushed into each other's arms, and wept for gladness. And oh! on that day of general thanksgiving and praise, how many an aspiration ascended to the Most High, implor-

ing blessings on him whom all time will consecrate as the FATHER OF HIS COUNTRY. That event was indeed the crowning glory of the war of the Revolution, hostilities languished thereafter, while Independence and empire dawned upon the destinies of America, from the surrender at Yorktown.

Recollections of Washington, by His Adopted Son, George Washington Parke Custis, p. 245.

"Posterity Will Huzza for Us"

After Cornwallis's surrender at Yorktown, Washington said to his army:

"My brave fellows, let no sense of satisfaction for the triumphs you have gained induce you to insult your fallen enemy. Let no shouting, no clamorous huzzaing increase their mortification. It is sufficient for us that we witness their humiliation. Posterity will huzza for us."

Washington's Birthday, Edited by Robert Haven Schauffler, p. 246.

"Then They Did Look at Us, but Were Not Very Well Pleased"

After a fruitless attempt to escape, in which the elements, as at Long Island, were on the side of America and her cause, on the morning of the seventeenth Cornwallis beat a parley. Terms were arranged, and, on the nineteenth, the British army laid down its arms.

The imposing ceremony took place at two o'clock. The American troops were drawn up on the right, and the French on the left, of the high road leading to Hampton. A vast crowd of persons from the adjoining country attended to witness the ceremony.

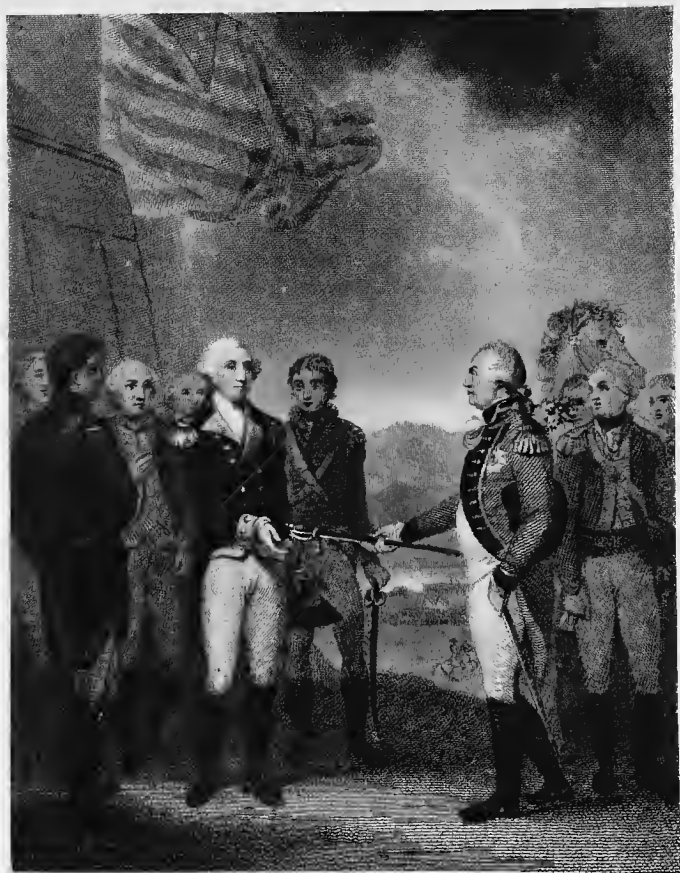
The captive army, in perfect order, marched in stern and solemn silence between the lines. All eyes were turned toward the head of the advancing column. Cornwallis, the renowned, the dreaded Cornwallis, was the object that thousands longed to behold. He did not appear, but sent his sword by General O'Hara, with an apology for his non-appearance on account of indisposition. It was remarked that the British soldiers looked only toward the French army on the left, whose appearance was assuredly more brilliant

than that of the Americans, though the latter were respectable in both their clothing and appointments, while their admirable discipline and the hardy and veteran appearance of both officers and men showed they were no "carpet knights," but soldiers who had seen service and were inured to war.

Lafayette, at the head of his division, observing that the captives confined their admiration exclusively to the French army, neglecting his darling light-infantry, the very apple of his eye and pride of his heart, determined to bring "eyes to the right." He ordered his music to strike up Yankee Doodle: "Then," said the good general, "they did look at us, my dear sir, but were not very well pleased."

When ordered to ground arms, the Hessian was content. He was tired of the war; his pipe and his patience pretty well exhausted, he longed to bid adieu to toilsome marches, battles, and the heat of the climate that consumed him. Not so the British soldier; many threw their arms to the ground in sullen despair. One fine veteran fellow displayed a soldierly feeling that excited the admiration of all around. He hugged his musket to his bosom, gazed tenderly on it, pressed it to his lips, then threw it from him, and marched away dissolved in tears.

On the day of the surrender, the commander-in-chief rode his favorite and splendid charger, named Nelson, a light sorrel, sixteen hands high, with white face and legs, and remarkable as being the first nicked horse seen in America. This famous charger died at Mount Vernon many years after the Revolution, at a very advanced age. After the chief had ceased to mount him, he was never ridden, but grazed in a paddock in summer, and was well cared for in winter; and as often as the retired farmer of Mount Vernon would be making a tour of his grounds, he would halt at the paddock, when the old war-horse would run, neighing, to the fence, proud to be caressed by the great master's hands.



THE SURRENDER OF CORNWALLIS

(This fine picture is not true to the facts, for Cornwallis sent General O'Hara with the sword, and Washington allowed General Lincoln to receive it.)

The Numbers Involved

The number of prisoners made by the above capitulation amounted to 7,073, of whom 5,950 were rank and file, six commissioned, and twenty-eight non-commissioned officers, and privates, had previously been captured in the two redoubts, or in the sortie of the garrison. The loss sustained by the garrison during the siege, in killed, wounded, and missing, amounted to 552. That of the combined army in killed was about 300. The combined army to which Cornwallis surrendered, was estimated at 16,000, of whom 7,000 were French, 5,500 continentals, and 3,500 militia.

Holmes's Annals, Vol. II, p. 333.

The Manly, Frank, and Soldierly Bearing of Cornwallis

The day after the surrender, Earl Cornwallis repaired to headquarters to pay his respects to General Washington and await his orders. The captive chief was received with all the courtesy due to a gallant and unfortunate foe. The elegant manners, together with the manly, frank, and soldierly bearing of Cornwallis soon made him a prime favorite at headquarters, and he often formed part of the suite of the commander-in-chief in his rides to inspect the leveling of the works previous to the retirement of the combined armies from before Yorktown.

At the grand dinner given at the headquarters to the officers of the three armies, Washington filled his glass, and, after his invariable toast, whether in peace or war, of "*All our friends*," gave "*The British Army*," with some complimentary remarks upon its chief, his proud career in arms, and his gallant defense of Yorktown. When it came to Cornwallis's turn, he prefaced his toast by saying that the war was virtually at an end, and the contending parties would soon embrace as friends; there might be affairs of posts but nothing on a more enlarged scale, as it was scarcely to be expected that the ministry would send another army

to America. Then turning to Washington, his lordship continued: "And when the illustrious part that your Excellency has borne in this long and arduous contest becomes matter of history, fame will gather your brightest laurels rather from the banks of the Delaware than from those of the Chesapeake." In this his lordship alluded to the memorable midnight march made by Washington with the shattered remains of the grand army, aided by the Pennsylvania militia, on the night of the second of January, 1777, which resulted in the surprise of the enemy in his rear, and the victory of Princeton, restoring hope to the American cause when it was almost sinking in despair.

Recollections of Washington, by His Adopted Son, George Washington Parke Custis, p. 249.

Several Samples of Washington's Humor

There were on the Mount Vernon plantation three hundred and seventy head of cattle, and Washington appends to the report a sad regret that with all this number of horned beasts, he yet has to buy butter. There is also a fine, grim humor shown in the incident of a flag of truce coming in at New York, bearing a message from General Howe, addressed to "Mr. Washington." The General took the letter from the hand of the red-coat, glanced at the superscription, and said, "Why, this letter is not for me! It is directed to a planter in Virginia—I'll keep it and give it to him at the end of the war." Then, cramming the letter into his pocket, he ordered the flag of truce out of the lines and directed the gunners to stand by. In an hour another letter came back addressed to "His Excellency, General Washington." [This is not literally true. W. W.]

It was not long after this that a soldier brought to Washington a dog that had been found wearing a collar with the name of General Howe engraved on it. Washington returned the dog by a special messenger with a note reading, "General Washington sends his compliments to

General Howe, and begs to return one dog that evidently belongs to him." In this instance I am inclined to think that Washington acted in sober good faith but was the victim of a practical joke on the part of his aides.

Another remark that sounds like a joke, but perhaps was not one, was when, on taking command of the army at Boston, the General writes to his life-long friend, Dr. Craik, asking what he can do for him and adding a sentiment still in the air:

"But these Massachusetts people suffer nothing to go by them that they can lay their hands on."

In another letter he pays his compliments to Connecticut thus:

"Their impecunious meanness surpasses belief."

When Cornwallis surrendered at Yorktown, Washington refused to humiliate him and his officers by accepting their swords. He treated Cornwallis as his guest and even gave a dinner in his honor. At this dinner Rochambeau being asked for a toast gave "The United States." Washington proposed "The King of France." Cornwallis merely gave "The King," and Washington, putting the toast, expressed it as Cornwallis intended, "The King of England," and added a sentiment of his own that made even Cornwallis laugh—"may he stay there!" Washington's treatment of Cornwallis made him a life-long friend.

Little Journeys to the Homes of American Statesmen, Elbert Hubbard, p. 34.

" There Are Modes of Discharging a Soldier's Duty "

Colonel Tarleton, alone of all the British officers of rank, was left out of the invitations to headquarters. Gallant and high-spirited, the colonel applied to the Marquis de Lafayette to know whether the neglect might not have been accidental. Lafayette well knew that accident had nothing to do with the matter, but referred the applicant to Lieutenant-colonel Laurens, who, as *aide-de-camp* to the commander-in-chief,

must of course be able to give the requisite explanation. Laurens at once said:

"No, Colonel Tarleton, no accident at all; intentional, I can assure you, and meant as a reproof for certain cruelties practised by the troops under your command in the campaigns of the Carolinas."

"What, sir," haughtily rejoined Tarleton, "and is it for severities inseparable from war, which you are pleased to term cruelties, that I am to be disgraced before junior officers? Is it, sir, for a faithful discharge of my duty to my king and my country, that I am thus humiliated in the eyes of three armies?"

"Pardon me," continued Colonel Laurens, "there are modes, sir, of discharging a soldier's duty more acceptable to both friends and foes."

Tarleton stalked gloomily away to his quarters, which he seldom left until his departure from Virginia.

Recollections of Washington, by His Adopted Son, George Washington Parke Custis, p. 251.

"And Cornwallis Is Taken!"

The accomplished Lieutenant-colonel Tilghman, one of Washington's aids, was sent to Philadelphia by the chief, with despatches to the Congress, announcing the surrender of Cornwallis. He arrived there in the night, and soon the watchmen of the city were calling the hours, with the suffix, "*and Cornwallis is taken!*" That annunciation ringing out on the frosty night-air, aroused thousands from their slumbers. Lights were soon seen moving in almost every house; and presently the streets were thronged with men and women, all eager to hear the details. It was a joyous night for Philadelphia. The old state-house bell rang out its jubilant notes more than an hour before dawn, and the first blush of morning was greeted with the booming of cannon. The Congress assembled at an early hour, when Charles Thomson read Washington's despatch, and then they resolved to go in

procession at two o'clock the same day, to a temple of worship, "and return thanks to Almighty God for crowning the allied armies of the United States and France with success."

Recollections of Washington, by His Adopted Son, George Washington Parke Custis, p. 246.

The "Financier of the Revolution" in Prison for Debt

"When, a few months later, she [the mother of Mr. Robert E. Gray, of Philadelphia] was one night roused from her sleep by the old watchman crying under her window, 'Past twelve o'clock, and Lord Cornwallis is taken!' she knew, and all our people knew, that Robert Morris had had a great deal to do in bringing about that surrender, which virtually ended the war. He had been the right hand of Washington. Yet, while Washington was President, Robert Morris was confined in the old debtor's prison in Philadelphia."

"What a shame!" one of us hotly exclaimed. "Why did not Congress pay his debts, and liberate one to whom the nation owed so great a debt?"

"Well, that was not thought practicable. His liabilities were immense, and the precedent would have been, perhaps, a little dangerous. He was a rash manager of his own affairs. He bore his misfortunes bravely, they said; but I think he used to look very sad as he walked up and down the narrow prison-yard. Sometimes, I remember, he seemed to be listening, in a pleased sort of way, to old Billy Wood, the play-actor, who was also in difficulties. Wood was an educated man, and good company."

Stories and Sketches, Grace Greenwood, p. 23.

"It Is High Time for Me to Die"

Lord Fairfax on hearing that Washington had captured Lord Cornwallis and all his army, he called to his black

waiter, "Come, Joe! carry me to bed, for it is high time for me to die!"

Then up rose Joe, all at the word,
And took his master's arm,
And thus to bed he softly led
The lord of Greenway farm.

There oft he called on Britain's name,
And oft he wept full sore,
Then sighed—"Thy will, oh Lord, be done"—
And word spake never more.

The Life of Washington, Mason L. Weems, p. 27.

The News of Yorktown in America and England

Early on a dark morning of the fourth week in October, an honest old German, slowly pacing the streets of Philadelphia on his night watch, began shouting, "Basht dree o'glock, und Gornwallis ish dakendt!" and light sleepers sprang out of bed and threw up their windows. Washington's courier laid the dispatches before Congress in the forenoon, and after dinner a service of prayer and thanksgiving was held in the Lutheran Church. At New Haven and Cambridge the students sang triumphal hymns, and every village green in the country was ablaze with bonfires. The Duke de Lauzun sailed for France in a swift ship, and on the 27th of November all the houses in Paris were illuminated and the aisles of Notre Dame resounded with the Te Deum. At noon of November 2nd, the news was brought to Lord George Germaine, at his house in Pall Mall. Getting into a cab, he drove hastily to the Lord Chancellor's house in Great Russell Street, Bloomsbury, and took him in; and then they drove to Lord North's office in Downing Street. At the staggering news, all the prime minister's wonted gayety forsook him. He walked wildly up and down the room, throwing his arms about and crying, "Oh God! it is all over! it is all over! it is all over!" A dispatch was sent to the king at Kew, and when Lord George received the answer

that evening at dinner, he observed that his Majesty wrote calmly, but had forgotten to date his letter,—a thing which had never happened before.

"The tidings," says Wraxall, who narrates these incidents, "were calculated to diffuse a gloom over the most convivial society, and opened a wide field for political speculation." There were many people in England, however, who looked at this matter differently from Lord North. This crushing defeat was just what the Duke of Richmond, at the beginning of the war, had publicly declared he hoped for. Charles Fox always took especial delight in reading about the defeats of invading armies, from Marathon and Salamis downward; and over the news of Cornwallis's surrender he leaped from his chair and clapped his hands. In a debate in Parliament, four months before, the youthful William Pitt had denounced the American war as "most accursed, wicked, barbarous, cruel, unnatural, unjust, and diabolical," which led Burke to observe, "He is not a chip of the old block; he is the old block itself!"

The fall of Lord North's ministry, and with it the overthrow of the personal government of George III, was now close at hand. For a long time the government had been losing favor. In the summer of 1780, the British victories in South Carolina had done something to strengthen it; yet when, in the autumn of that year, Parliament was dissolved, although the king complained that his expenses for purposes of corruption had been twice as great as ever before, the new Parliament was scarcely more favorable to the ministry than the old one. Misfortunes and perplexities crowded in the path of Lord North and his colleagues. The example of American resistance told upon Ireland, and it was in the full tide of that agitation which is associated with the names of Flood and Grattan that the news of Cornwallis's surrender was received.

After the surrender of Cornwallis, no one but the king thought of pursuing the war in America any further. Even

he gave up all hope of subduing the United States but he insisted upon retaining the state of Georgia, with the cities of Charleston and New York; and he vowed that, rather than acknowledge the independence of the United States, he would abdicate the throne and retire to Hanover. Lord George Germaine was dismissed from office, Sir Henry Clinton was superseded by Sir Guy Carleton, and the king began to dream of a new campaign. But his obstinacy was of no avail. During the winter and spring, General Wayne, acting under Greene's orders, drove the British from Georgia, while at home the country squires began to go over to the opposition; and Lord North, utterly discouraged and disgusted, refused any longer to pursue a policy of which he disapproved. The baffled and beaten king, like the fox in the fable, declared that the Americans were a wretched set of knaves, and he was glad to be rid of them. The House of Commons began to talk of a vote of censure on the administration. A motion of Conway's, petitioning the king to stop the war, was lost by only a single vote; and at last, on the 20th of March, 1782, Lord North bowed to the storm and resigned. The two sections of the Whig party coalesced. Lord Rockingham became Prime Minister, and with him came into office Shelburne, Camden, and Grafton, as well as Fox and Conway, the Duke of Richmond, and Lord John Cavendish,—staunch friends of America, all of them, whose appointment involved the recognition of the independence of the United States.

Lord North observed that he had often been accused of issuing lying bulletins, but he had never told so big a lie as that with which the new ministry announced its entrance into power; for in introducing the name of each of these gentlemen, the official bulletin used the words, "His Majesty has been *pleased* to appoint!" It was indeed a day of bitter humiliation for George III, and the men who had been his tools. But it was a day of happy omen for the English race in the Old World as well as in the New. The

decisive battle of freedom in England as well as in America, and in that vast colonial world for which Chatham prophesied the dominion of the future, had now been fought and won. And foremost in accomplishing this glorious work had been the lofty genius of Washington, and the steadfast valor of the men who suffered with him at Valley Forge, and whom he led to victory at Yorktown.

The American Revolution, John Fiske, Vol. II, p. 285.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE CLOSE OF THE WAR

Grief in the Midst of Rejoicing

A domestic affliction threw a shade over Washington's happiness, while his camp still rang with shouts of triumph for the surrender of Yorktown. His stepson (to whom he had been a parent and protector, and to whom he was fondly attached), who had accompanied him to the camp at Cambridge, and was among the first of his aids in the dawn of the Revolution, sickened while on duty as extra aid to the commander-in-chief in the trenches before Yorktown. Aware that his disease (the camp fever), would be mortal, the sufferer had yet one last lingering wish to be gratified, and he would die content. It was to behold the surrender of the sword of Cornwallis. He was supported to the ground, and witnessed the admired spectacle, and was then removed to Eltham, a distance of thirty miles from camp.

An express from Dr. Craik announced that there was no longer hope, when Washington, attended by a single officer, and a groom, left the headquarters at midnight, and rode with all speed for Eltham.

The anxious watchers by the couch of the dying were, in the gray of the twilight, aroused by a trampling of horse, and looking out, discovered the commander-in-chief alighting from a jaded charger in the courtyard. He immediately summoned Dr. Craik, and to the eager inquiry, "Is there any hope?" Craik mournfully shook his head. The General retired to a room to indulge his grief, requesting to be left alone. In a little while the poor sufferer expired. Washington, tenderly embracing the bereaved wife and mother, observed to the weeping group around the remains of him

he so dearly loved, "From this moment I adopt his two youngest children as my own."* Absorbed in grief, he then waved with his hand a melancholy adieu, and, fresh horses being ready, without rest or refreshment, he remounted and returned to camp.

* These were Eleanor Parke Custis, who married Lawrence Lewis, the favorite nephew of General Washington, and George Washington Parke Custis—the latter, the author of these *Recollections*.

Recollections of Washington, by His Adopted Son, George Washington Parke Custis, p. 254.

"No Part of the Blame Shall Be Mine"

From Eltham, Washington proceeded to Mount Vernon; but public cares gave him little leisure to attend to his private concerns. We have seen how repeatedly his steady mind had been exercised in the darkest times of the revolutionary struggle, in buoying up the public heart when sinking into despondency. He had now an opposite task to perform, to guard against an overweening confidence inspired by the recent triumph. In a letter to General Greene he writes: "I shall remain but a few days here, and shall proceed to Philadelphia, when I shall attempt to stimulate Congress to the best improvement of our late success, by taking the most vigorous and effectual measures to be ready for an early and decisive campaign the next year. My greatest fear is, that Congress, viewing this stroke in too important a point of light, may think our work too nearly closed, and will fall into a state of languor and relaxation. To prevent this error I shall employ every means in my power, and if unhappily we sink into that fatal mistake, no part of the blame shall be mine."

Life of George Washington, Washington Irving, Vol. IV, p. 445.

The Mother of Washington at a Ball in His Honor

Meantime in the village of Fredericksburg, all was joy and revelry; the town was crowded with the officers of the French and American armies, and with gentlemen for many

miles around, who hastened to welcome the conquerors of Cornwallis. The citizens got up a splendid ball, to which the matron was specially invited. She observed, that although her dancing days were pretty well over, she should feel happy in contributing to the general festivity, and consented to attend.

The foreign officers were anxious to see the mother of their chief. They had heard indistinct rumors touching her remarkable life and character, but forming their judgments from European examples, they were prepared to expect in the mother, that glitter and show which would have been attached to the parents of the great, in the countries of the old world. How were they surprised, when leaning on the arm of her son, she entered the room dressed in the very plain, yet becoming garb, worn by the Virginia lady of the old time. Her address, always dignified and imposing, was courteous, though reserved. She received the complimentary attentions which were paid to her without evincing the slightest elevation, and at an early hour, wishing the company much enjoyment of their pleasures, observed, that it was high time for old folks to be in bed, and retired, leaning, as before, on the arm of her son.

The foreign officers were amazed in beholding one whom so many causes conspired to elevate, preserving the even tenor of her life, while such a blaze of glory shone upon her name and offspring. It was a moral spectacle such as the European world had furnished no examples. Names of ancient lore were heard to escape from their lips; and they declared, "if such are the matrons in America, well may she boast of illustrious sons."

Recollections of Washington, by His Adopted Son, George Washington Parke Custis,
p. 142.

" At the President's Feet, Congress and All! "

On Saturday last (November 3, 1781), between three and four o'clock in the afternoon, arrived here twenty-four

standards of colors taken with the British army under the command of Earl Cornwallis. The volunteer cavalry of this city received these trophies of victory at Schuylkill, from whence they escorted and ushered them into town amidst the acclamations of a numerous concourse of people. Continental and French colors, at a distance, preceded the British, and thus they were paraded down Market street to the state-house. They were then carried into Congress and laid at their feet.

The crowd exulting fills with shouts the sky,
The walls, the woods, and long canals reply:
Base Britons! Tyrant Britons—knock under,
Taken's your earl, soldiers and plunder.
Huzza! what colors of the bloody foe,
Twenty-four in number, at the state-house door;
Look: they are British standards, how they fall
At the President's feet, Congress and all

A newspaper account quoted in the *Recollections of Washington*, by His Adopted Son George Washington Parke Custis, p. 255.

Washington Goes to Newburg

It was now evident that the war could not last much longer, but it was still necessary to be prepared and vigilant, in case the British should undertake another campaign; and in this opinion Congress fully agreed with Washington.

Toward the close of 1781, Lafayette, who had done such good service in the late campaign, returned on a visit to France, with the thanks and commendations of Congress.

In April, 1782, General Washington joined the army at Newburg, on the Hudson; and in May, Sir Guy Carleton arrived from England to take the place of Sir Henry Clinton, who had grown weary of the war, and desired to be relieved. Sir Guy brought assurances of a desire for peace on the part of Great Britain, but as nothing official had been sent, there was nothing to be done but to prepare for more fighting.

The Young Folks' Life of Washington, Mrs. Anna M. Hyde, p. 183.

“ Patch up an Inglorious Peace ”

Nothing was ever finished with Washington until it was really complete throughout, and he had as little time for rejoicing as he had for despondency or despair, while a British force still remained in the country. He probably felt that this was as untoward a time as he had ever met in a pretty large experience of unsuitable occasions, for offering sound advice, but he was not deterred thereby from doing it. This time, however, he was destined to an agreeable disappointment, for on his arrival at Philadelphia he found an excellent spirit prevailing in Congress. That body was acting cheerfully on his advice, it had filled the departments of the government, and set on foot such measures as it could to keep up the army. So Washington remained for some time at Philadelphia, helping and counseling Congress in its work, and writing to the States vigorous letters, demanding pay and clothing for the soldiers, ever uppermost in his thoughts.

But although Congress was compliant, Washington could not convince the country of the justice of his views, and of the continued need of energetic exertion. The steady relaxation of tone, which the strain of a long and trying war had produced, was accelerated by the brilliant victory of Yorktown. Washington, for his own part, had but little trust in the sense or knowledge of the enemy. He felt that Yorktown was decisive, but he also thought that Great Britain would still struggle on, and that her talk of peace was very probably a mere blind, to enable her to gain time, and, by taking advantage of our relaxed and feeble condition, to strike again in hope of winning back all that had been lost. He therefore continued his appeals in behalf of the army, and reiterated everywhere the necessity for fresh and ample preparations.

As late as May 4th he wrote sharply to the States for men and money, saying that the change of ministry was

likely to be adverse to peace, and that we were being lulled into a false and fatal sense of security. A few days later, on receiving information from Sir Guy Carleton of the address of the Commons to the king for peace, Washington wrote to Congress:

"For my own part, I view our situation as such that, instead of relaxing, we ought to improve the present moment as the most favorable to our wishes. The British nation appear to me to be staggered, and almost ready to sink beneath the accumulating weight of debt and misfortune. If we follow the blow with vigor and energy, I think the game is our own."

Again he wrote in July: "Sir Guy Carleton is using every art to soothe and lull our people into a sense of security. Admiral Digby is capturing all our vessels, and suffocating as fast as possible in prison-ships all our seamen who will not enlist into the service of his Britannic Majesty; and Haldimand, with his savage allies, in scalping and burning on the frontiers."

A month later he wrote to Greene: "From the former infatuation, duplicity, and perverse system of British policy, I confess I am induced to doubt everything, to suspect everything."

Yet again, a month later still, when the negotiations were really going forward in Paris, he wrote to McHenry: "If we are wise let us prepare for the worst. There is nothing which will so soon produce a speedy and honorable peace as a state of preparation for war; we must either do this, or lay our account to patch up an inglorious peace, after all the toil, blood, and treasure we have spent."

George Washington, Henry Cabot Lodge, Vol. I, p. 315.

The Asgill Affair

In the month of March, 1782, one Philip White, an infamous Tory, was taken prisoner by a party of light-horse; after laying down his arms in token of surrender, he took up his musket and killed one of his captors. He was,

however, secured, while being taken to Freehold, New Jersey, was put to death, as some accounts say, in an effort to escape.

About the same time, Capt. Joshua Huddy, a gallant and honorable officer of the American army, while in command of a block house, at Tom's river, New Jersey, was attacked by a party of refugees, and after a gallant resistance, was taken prisoner and conveyed to New York. Shortly afterwards, he, with two others, was sent by the Board of Loyalists to Sandy Hook, to be exchanged, under the care of Capt. Lippencut, who, on his return, reported that "he had exchanged the two as directed, and that Huddy had been exchanged for Philip White." He had, in fact, hung him [Huddy] on a tree, on the Jersey shore.

Gen. Washington, on hearing of this fact, demanded of Sir Henry Clinton, the delivery of Lippencut, the murderer of Huddy, but though Lippencut was tried by a court martial for the offense, the loyalists interposed for his protection. On the failure of compliance with his demand, Gen. Washington determined, with the advice of his officers, on retaliation, and accordingly Capt. Charles Asgill, who had been taken prisoner at the capitulation of Yorktown, was selected, by lot, to atone the death of Huddy.

In the meanwhile, Sir Guy Carleton, who was known for his humanity, superseded Clinton, as commander of the British army, and broke up the Board of Associated Loyalists, thereby preventing a repetition of similar excesses. The war also drawing to a close, the motives for retaliation, in a great measure, ceased.

Mrs. Asgill on hearing of the perilous situation of her son, wrote to M. Vergennes, the French minister, a touching letter, describing her distress and that of her family, and begging his interference, in consequence of which, Vergennes interposed with Washington in Asgill's behalf. Copies of these letters were forwarded to Congress, and in the month of November following, they resolved that the commander-in-chief be directed to set Capt. Asgill at liberty.

Asgill, who had received every indulgence, and who had been treated with all possible politeness, was accordingly released, and permitted to rejoin his friends at New York. He returned to England, and afterwards became General Sir Charles Asgill, and died in 1823, at the age of seventy years.

The Conduct of General Washington Respecting the Confinement of Capt. Asgill, Preface, p. v.

“ Let Me Conjure You to Banish These Thoughts from Your Mind! ”

Underlying all these general discontents, there was, besides, a well-defined movement, which saw a solution of all difficulties and a redress of all wrongs in a radical change of the form of the government, and in the elevation of Washington to supreme power. This party was satisfied that the existing system was a failure, and that it was not and could not be made either strong, honest, or respectable. The obvious relief was in some kind of monarchy, with a large infusion of the one-man power; and it followed as a matter of course that the one man could be no other than the commander-in-chief. In May, 1782, when the feeling in the army had risen very high, this party of reform brought their ideas before Washington through an old and respected friend of his, Colonel Nicola. The colonel set forth very clearly the failure and shortcomings of the existing government, argued in favor of the substitution of something much stronger, and wound up by hinting very plainly that his correspondent was the man for the crisis and the proper savior of society. The letter was forcible and well written, and Colonel Nicola was a man of character and standing. It could not be passed over lightly or in silence, and Washington replied as follows:

“ With a mixture of surprise and astonishment, I have read with attention the sentiments you have submitted to my perusal. Be assured, sir, no occurrence in the course

of the war has given me more painful sensations than your information of there being such ideas existing in the army as you have expressed, and which I must view with abhorrence and reprehend with severity. For the present, the communication of them will rest in my own bosom, unless some further agitation in the matter shall make a disclosure necessary. I am much at a loss to conceive what part of my conduct could have given encouragement to an address which seems to me big with the greatest mischiefs which can befall my country. If I am not deceived in the knowledge of myself, you could not have found a person to whom your schemes are more disagreeable. At the same time, in justice to my own feelings, I must add that no man possesses a more sincere wish to see justice done to the army than I do; and as far as my power and influence in a constitutional way extend, they shall be employed to the utmost of my abilities to effect it, should there be any occasion. Let me conjure you, then, if you have any regard for your country, concern for yourself or posterity, or respect for me, to banish these thoughts from your mind, and never communicate, as from yourself or anyone else, a sentiment of the like nature."

George Washington, Henry Cabot Lodge, Vol. 1, p. 328.

" It Is High Time for a Peace "

Nothing was ever again heard of the project to make of Washington "King George I, of America"; on the contrary, the Nicola letter made Washington more anxious than before to have peace concluded so that he might disband his army. While keeping his men in fighting trim, offering a threatening front to the enemy at New York, and even coaxing Rochambeau and the French from Virginia to the Highlands so as to frighten Carleton, Clinton's successor, into keeping his force intact instead of detaching some to fight the French in the West Indies, he was sincerely longing for the end. And yet, even the assurance of peace,

when it came, was not to relieve his mind of forebodings and fears. The poverty of the country was beyond expression; persons who saw some portions of the South just after the late civil war may form an impression of it, but the most afflicted localities in the South were not in as helpless condition as were all the colonies at the close of the war period. So poor were some of Washington's officers of high rank that they did not dare invite their acquaintances in the French army to their tents, for they could not offer them as good a dinner as every private soldier in the United States now enjoys daily. In the autumn of 1782, writing of the reduction of the army that had been proposed, there being then little doubt, on either side, of the speedy conclusion of a treaty of peace, Washington said:

"I cannot help fearing the result of the measure in contemplation, under present circumstances, when I see such a number of men, goaded by a thousand stings of reflection on the past, and of anticipation in the future, about to be turned into the world, soured by penury, and what they call the ingratitude of the public, involved in debts, without one farthing of money to carry them home, after spending the flower of their days, and many of them their patrimonies, in establishing the freedom and independence of their country, and suffered everything that human nature is capable of enduring on this side of death;—I repeat it, that when I consider these irritating circumstances, without one thing to soothe their feelings or dispel gloomy prospects, I cannot avoid apprehending that a train of evils will follow, of a very serious and distressing nature.

I wish not to heighten the shades of the picture so far as the reality would justify me in doing it. I could give anecdotes of patriotism and distress, which have scarcely ever been paralleled, never surpassed in the history of mankind. But you may rely upon it, the patience and long-suffering of this army are almost exhausted, and that there never was so great a spirit of discontent as at this

instant. While in the field I think it may be kept from breaking out into acts of outrage; but when we retire into winter quarters, unless the storm is previously dissipated, I cannot be at ease respecting the consequences. It is high time for a peace."

George Washington, John Habberton, p. 238.

"A Bitter Pill to Royalty"

(Letter to Tench Tilghman).

"Newburg, 10 January, 1783

"My dear Sir,—

"I have been favored with your letters of the 22d & 24th of last month from Philadelphia; and thank you for the trouble you have had with my small commissions. . . . I have sent Mr. Rittenhouse the glass of such spectacles as suit my eyes, that he may know how to grind his Christals.

"Neither Duportail nor Gouvion are arrived at this place. . . . To the latter, I am referred by the Marqs. la Fayette for some matters which he did not chuse to commit to writing.—The sentim'nt however which he has delivered (with respect to the negociations for Peace) accord precisely with the ideas I have entertained of this business ever since the secession of Mr. Fox, viz—that no peace would be concluded before the meeting of the British parliament.—And that, if it did not take place within a month afterwards, we might lay our acc't for one more Campaign—at least.

"The obstinacy of the King, and his unwillingness to acknowledge the Independence of the Country, I have ever considered as the greatest obstacles in the way of a Peace. Lord Shelburne, who is not only at the head of the Administration, but has been introducing others of similar sentiments to his own, has declared, that nothing but dire necessity should ever force the measure. Of this necessity,

men will entertain different opinions. Mr. Fox, it seems, thought the period had arrived some time ago; and yet the Peace is not made—nor will it, I conceive, if the influence of the Crown can draw fresh supplies from the Nation, for the purpose of carrying on the War. By the meeting of Parliament, Lord Shelburne would have been able to ascertain two things—first, the best terms on which G. Britain could obtain the Peace.—Secondly, the ground on which he himself stood.—If he found it slippery, and that the voice of the people was for pacific measures; he would then have informed the Parliament that, after many months spent in negociation,—such were the best terms he could obtain;—and that the alternative of accepting them,—or preparing vigorously for the prosecution of the War, was submitted to their consideration (being an extraordinary case) and decision. A little time therefore, if I have formed a just opinion of the matter, will disclose the result of it. Consequently we shall either soon have Peace, or not the most agreeable prospect of War, before us—as it appears evident to me, that the States *generally*, are sunk into the most profound lethargy, while some of them are running *quite* retrograde.

“The King of G. B. by his letters Patent, (which I have seen) has authorized Mr. Oswald to treat with any Commissioner or Com’rs from the United States of America, who shall appear with proper powers. This, certainly, is a capital point gained. It is at least a breaking ground on *their* part, and I dare say proved a bitter pill to Royalty; that, it was indispensably necessary to answer one of the points above mentioned, as the American Commissioners would enter in *no business* with Mr. Oswald till his Powers were made to suit their purposes. Upon the whole, I am fixed in an opinion that Peace, or a pretty long continuance of the War, will have been determined before the adjournment for the Hollidays; and as it will be the middle or last of February before we shall know the result, time will pass

heavily on in this dreary mansion—where, at present fast locked in frost and snow.”

[G. WASHINGTON.]

Writings of George Washington, Edited by Lawrence B. Evans, Ph.D., p. 178.

British Jeers at the Stars and Stripes

“There is a vessel in the harbor with a very strange flag. Thirteen is a number peculiar to the rebels. A party of naval prisoners, lately returned from Jersey, say that the rations among the rebels are thirteen dried clams a day. The titular Lord Stirling takes thirteen glasses of grog every morning, has thirteen rum bunches on his nose, and that when he gets drunk makes thirteen attempts before he can walk. Sachem Schuyler has a top-knot of thirteen stiff hairs which erect themselves on the crown of his head when he gets mad. It takes thirteen Congress paper dollars to equal one shilling sterling. Polly [Gen. Anthony] Wayne was just thirteen hours in subduing Stony Point, and thirteen seconds leaving it. Every well-organized rebel household has thirteen children, all of whom expect to be major-generals or members of the high and mighty Congress of the thirteen United States when they attain the age of thirteen years. Mr. Washington has thirteen teeth in each jaw, and thirteen toes on each foot, the extra ones having grown since that wonderful Declaration of Independence, and Mrs. Washington has a tomcat with thirteen yellow rings around his tail, and that his flaunting it suggested to the Congress the same number of stripes for the rebel flag.”

London Chronicle, February 7, 1783.

“The Odious Aroma of Impotent Malice”

The 30th of the previous November,—it was now March, 1783,—had seen the signing of the preliminaries of peace at Paris, after long and difficult negotiations between



General Francis Marion



Gen. ("Mad") Anthony Wayne

TWO ROMANTIC HEROES OF THE REVOLUTION

Oswald, Grenville, and Strachey on behalf of the British, and Franklin, Adams, Jay, and Laurens on behalf of the other side. Perhaps the very news of peace excited the suspicions of the army that Congress would disband them without settling its accounts, and that thus their sufferings would never be requited.

This mutinous spirit, which had before filled the Pennsylvania and Jersey troops, and had lately caused Congress to flee in terror from Philadelphia to Princeton, was, not without reason, attributed to Gates, "about whom hangs the odious aroma of impotent malice"; the ambiguous politician-commander had claimed the glory of Saratoga, had been forced to retire after his crushing defeat by Cornwallis at Camden, South Carolina, and, now reinforced, had by the magnanimity of Washington been put in command of the right wing of the American army at the New York headquarters.

Perhaps the return of the French troops, in October and January, aroused that longing for home, "the desire to kiss wives and sweethearts,"—which all along had made the American soldiers' position one of peculiar hardship. Washington's keen appreciation of the fortitude of his men crops out in a letter of congratulation to General Greene, on the happy ending of the Charleston campaign:

"It is with a pleasure, which friendship only is susceptible of, that I congratulate you on the glorious end you have put to the hostilities in the Southern States. The honor and advantages of it, I hope and trust you will long live to enjoy. . . . If historiographers should be hardy enough to fill the page of History with the advantages, that have been gained with unequal numbers (on the part of America), in the course of this contest, and attempt to relate the distressing circumstances under which they have been obtained, it is more than probable, that posterity will bestow on their labors the epithet and marks of fiction; for it will not be believed, that such a force as Great Britain

has employed for eight years in this country could be baffled in their plan for subjugating it, by numbers infinitely less, composed of men oftentimes half starved, always in rags, without pay, and experiencing at times every species of distress, which human nature is capable of undergoing. I intended to have wrote you a long letter on sundry matters; but Major Burnet popped in unexpectedly at a time, when I was preparing for the celebration of the day, and was just going to a review of the troops, previous to the *feu de joie*."

George Washington, Patriot, Soldier, Statesman, James A. Harrison, p. 366.

Rode Like Black Care behind Him

Much as Washington thought about holding fast the western country, there was yet one idea that overruled it as well as all others. There was one plan which he knew would be a quick solution of the dangers and difficulties for which inland navigation and trade connections were at best but palliatives. He had learned by bitter experience as no other man had learned, the vital need and value of union. He felt it as soon as he took command of the army, and it rode like black care behind him from Cambridge to Yorktown. He had hoped something from the confederation, but he soon saw that it was as worthless as the utter lack of system which it replaced, and amounted merely to substituting one kind of impotence and confusion for another. Others might be deceived by phrases as to nationality and a general government, but he had dwelt among hard facts, and he knew that these things did not exist. He knew that what passed for them, stood in their place and wore their semblance, were merely temporary creations born of the common danger, and doomed, when the pressure of war was gone, to fall to pieces in imbecility and inertness. To the lack of a proper union, which meant to his mind national and energetic government, he attributed the failures of the campaigns, the long drawn miseries, and

in a word the needless prolongation of the Revolution. He saw, too, that what had been so nearly ruinous in war would be absolutely so in peace, and before the treaty was actually signed he had begun to call attention to the great question on the right settlement of which the future of the country depended.

To Hamilton he wrote on March 4, 1783:

"It is clearly my opinion, unless Congress have powers competent to all general purposes, that the distresses we have encountered, the expense we have incurred, and the blood we have spilt, will avail us nothing."

Again he wrote to Hamilton, a few weeks later:

"My wish to see the union of these States established upon liberal and permanent principles, and inclination to contribute my mite in pointing out the defects of the present constitution, are equally great. All my private letters have teemed with these sentiments, and whenever this topic has been the subject of conversation, I have endeavored to diffuse and enforce them."

His circular letter to the governors of the States at the close of the war, which was as eloquent as it was forcible, was devoted to urging the necessity of a better central government. "With this conviction," he said, "of the importance of the present crisis, silence in me would be a crime. I will therefore speak to your Excellency the language of freedom and of sincerity without disguise.

There are four things which I humbly conceive are essential to the well-being, I may even venture to say, to the existence of the United States, as an independent power:

"First. An indissoluble union of the States under one federal head.

"Second. A regard to public justice.

"Third. The adoption of a proper peace establishment; and,

"Fourth. The prevalence of that pacific and friendly

disposition among the people of the United States, which will induce them to forget their local prejudices and policies; to make those mutual concessions which are requisite to the general prosperity; and in some instances to sacrifice their individual advantages to the interest of the community." The same appeal went forth again in his last address to the army, when he said: "Although the General has so frequently given it as his opinion, in the most public and explicit manner, that unless the principles of the federal government were properly supported, and the powers of the Union increased, the honor, dignity, and justice of the nation would be lost forever; yet he cannot help repeating on this occasion so interesting a sentiment, and leaving it as his last injunction to every soldier, who may view the subject in the same serious point of light, to add his best endeavors to those of his fellow-citizens toward effecting those great and valuable purposes on which our very existence as a nation so materially depends."

George Washington, Henry Cabot Lodge, Vol. II, p. 16.

News of the Treaty of Peace

A week after the meeting of officers in Washington's camp, the intelligence reached America, through a letter from Lafayette to the President of Congress, that the treaty of peace had been signed at Paris nearly two months before. Washington subsequently received the same information through Sir Guy Carleton, and by a proclamation of Congress. His first act, and he committed it the day after hearing from Congress, was to ask when and how to discharge his men, and suggesting, as few or no generals before him ever had enough true soldierly feeling to do, that the private soldiers and non-commissioned officers should be allowed, when discharged, to retain their arms and accoutrements. "This," he said, "would be deemed an honorable testimonial from Congress of the regard they bear to these

distinguished worthies and the sense they have of their suffering, virtues, and services." Truer sympathy and better heart seldom were combined in the space of thirty words. "These constant companions of their toils," continued the commander-in-chief, "preserved with sacred attention, would be handed down from the present possessors to their children as honorary badges of bravery and military merit, and would probably be brought forth on some future occasion, with pride and exultation, to be improved with the same military ardor and emulation in the hands of posterity, as they have been used by their forefathers in the present establishment and foundation of our national independence and glory." This sentence will not meet the views of the rhetorician, but the patriot will understand it distinctly, and patriots, not rhetoricians, are the men who make nations.

One day after—and it was the anniversary of the battle of Lexington, the first fight of the war—the cessation of hostilities was formally proclaimed in every camp, with Washington's orders that "the chaplains with the several brigades will render thanks to Almighty God for all His mercies." Even when the war was at its end, Washington could not avoid showing a point of difference between himself and other soldiers, to the effect that in the vicissitudes incident to military life he had lost none of his religious feeling. The general order of the day showed that he had been equally successful with his idea of the dignity of manhood, for it read: "The generous task for which we first flew to arms being accomplished; the liberties of our country being fully acknowledged and firmly secured, and the characters of those who have persevered through every extremity of hardship, suffering and danger being immortalized by the illustrious appellation of 'the patriot army,' nothing now remains but for the actors of this mighty scene to preserve a perfect, unvarying consistency of character through the very last act, to close the drama with applause, and to

retire from the military theater with the same approbation of angels and men which has crowned all their former virtuous actions."

George Washington, John Habberton, p. 249.

The Eighth Anniversary

Eight years from the first shock of arms at Lexington, the commander-in-chief issued the proclamation of Congress ordering cessation of hostilities. The news was received with huzzas, followed by prayer; to the accompaniment of the band the army sang the anthem "Independence." For the evening celebration the regiments were ordered to bring in timbers from ten to thirty feet long to form a frame for fireworks over the New Building. Combustibles collected on the summit of Beacon, Cro' Nest and Storm King, for the purpose of heralding the approach of the enemy, were now used in the celebration of peace. Amidst this rejoicing Washington left for Ringwood, N. J., to arrange with the Secretary of War for the exchange of prisoners, so that the more imposing celebration was reserved for the city of New York.

George Washington Day by Day, Elizabeth Bryant Johnston, p. 58.

Independence

(Sung in celebration of the close of the War).

The States, O Lord, with songs of praise,
Shall in thy strength rejoice,
And blessed with thy salvation raise
To Heaven their cheerful voice;
And all the Continent shall sing
Down with this earthly king;
No King but God!
No King but God!

George Washington Day by Day, Elizabeth Bryant Johnston, p. 58.

"An Independent People Yet to Learn Political Tactics "

(Letter to the Marquis de Lafayette).

"HEAD-QUAS., NEWBURG, 5 April, 1783

"*My dear Marqs:*

"We stand, now, an Independent People, and have yet to learn political Tactics. We are placed among the nations of the Earth, and have a character to establish; but how we shall acquit ourselves, time must discover. The probability (at least I fear it), is that local or State politics will interfere too much with the more liberal and extensive form of government, which wisdom and foresight, freed from the mist of prejudice, would dictate; and that we shall be guilty of many blunders in treading this boundless theatre, before we shall have arrived at any perfection in this art; in a word, that the experience which is purchased at the price of difficulties and distress, will alone convince us that the honor, power and true Interest of this Country must be measured by a Continental scale, and that every departure therefrom weakens the Union, and may ultimately break the band that holds us together. To avert these evils, to form a Constitution, that will give consistency, stability, and dignity to the Union, and sufficient powers to the great Council of the nation for general purposes, is a duty which is incumbent on every man, who wishes well to his country, and will meet with my aid as far as it can be rendered in the private walks of life; for henceforward my mind shall be unbent and I will endeavor to glide gently down the stream of life till I come to that abyss from whence no traveller is permitted to return."

[G. WASHINGTON.]

Writings of George Washington, Edited by Lawrence B. Evans, Ph D., p. 243.

“ For Heaven’s Sake, Who Are Congress ? ”

(From a letter to Dr. William Gordon.)

“ HEAD QUARTERS, NEWBURG,

“ 8 July, 1783.

“ *Dear Sir:*

“ It now rests with the Confederated Powers, by the line of conduct they mean to adopt, to make this Country great, happy, and respectable; or to sink it into littleness—worse perhaps—into Anarchy and confusion; for certain I am, that unless adequate Powers are given to Congress for the *general* purposes of the Federal Union, that we shall soon moulder into dust and become contemptible in the eyes of Europe, if we are not made the sport of their Politicks. .

“ For Heaven’s sake, who are Congress? are they not the creatures of the People, amenable to them for their conduct, and dependent from day to day on their breath? Where then can be the danger of giving them such Powers as are adequate to the great ends of the Government, and to all the general purposes of the Confederation (I repeat the word *general*, because I am no advocate for their having to do with the particular policy of any State, further than it concerns the Union at large)? What may be the consequences if they have not these Powers, I am at no loss to guess; and deprecate the worst; for sure I am, we shall, in a little time become as contemptible in the great scale of Politicks, as we now have it in our power to be respectable. And that, when the band of Union gets once broken, everything ruinous to our future prospects is to be apprehended. The best that can come of it, in my humble opinion is, that we shall sink into obscurity, unless our civil broils should keep us in remembrance and fill the page of history with the direful consequences of them.

You say that, Congress loose time by pressing a mode

that does not accord with the genius of the People, and will thereby, endanger the Union, and that it is the quantum they want. Permit me to ask if the quantum has not already been demanded? Whether it has obtained? and whence proceeds the accumulated evils, and poignant distresses of many of the Public Creditors—particularly in the Army. For my own part I hesitate not a moment to confess, that I see nothing wherein the Union is endangered by the late requisition of that body, but a prospect of much good, justice, and prosperity from the compliance with it. I know of no tax more convenient, none so agreeable, as that which every man may pay,—or let it alone, as his convenience, abilities, or Inclination shall prompt. I am therefore a warm friend to the impost.”

[G. WASHINGTON.]

Writings of Washington, Edited by Lawrence B. Evans, Ph.D., p. 244.

Washington Takes Leave of His Officers

In April, 1783, peace was proclaimed. In November of that year I heard from Colonel Hamilton that our beloved general would, on December 4, take leave of his officers, and that he was kind enough to desire that all of his old staff who wished should be present. I was most pleased to go.

In New York, at Fraunces' Tavern, near Whitehall Ferry, I found the room full of the men who had humbled the pride of England and brought our great war to a close. His Excellency entered at noon, and seeing about him these many companions in arms, was for a little so agitated that he could not speak. Then with a solemn and kindly expression of face, such as I had once before seen him wear, he filled a glass with wine, and, seeming to steady himself, said:

“With a heart full of love and gratitude, I take my leave of you, most devoutly wishing that your latter days may be as prosperous and happy as your former ones have been glorious and honorable.”

So saying, he drank his wine, and one after another went by him shaking his hand. No word was said, and these worn veterans of the winter camps and the summer battle-fields moved out, and saw their former general pass down, between lines of infantry, to the shore. There he got into a barge.

As he was rowed away he stood up and lifted his hat. All of us uncovered, and remained thus till he passed from sight, to be seen no more by many of those who gazed sadly after his retreating form.

There is an old book my grandchildren love to hear me read to them. It is the "*Morte d'Arthur*," done into English by Sir Thomas Malory. Often when I read therein of how Arthur the king bade farewell to the world and to the last of the great company of his Knights of the Round Table, this scene at Whitehall slip comes back to me, and I seem to see once more those gallant soldiers, and far away the tall figure of surely the knightliest gentleman our days have known.

Hugh Wynne: Free Quaker, S. Weir Mitchell, M.D., LL.D., p. 565.

Kissing His Officers While Tears Flowed down Their Cheeks

When the British had evacuated New York, in November, 1783, and the American army was disbanded, Washington prepared to proceed to Annapolis to resign his commission. On Thursday, the fourth of December, the principal officers in the army yet remaining in the service, assembled at Fraunces', to take a final leave of their beloved chief. The scene is described as one of great tenderness. Washington entered the room where they were all waiting, and taking a glass of wine in his hand, he said,

"With a heart full of love and gratitude, I now take leave of you. I devoutly wish that your latter days may be as prosperous and happy as your former ones have been glorious and honorable."

23) D. The United States... with... Washington... 67 (24)

1777		Brought	Amount
Jan 1	To Balance of the last acct		\$ 399 51 11
Feb 1	To Dr. for 1000 lbs of sugar		97 10
Mar 1	To Dr. for 1000 lbs of sugar		97 10
Apr 1	To Dr. for 1000 lbs of sugar		97 10
May 1	To Dr. for 1000 lbs of sugar		97 10
Jun 1	To Dr. for 1000 lbs of sugar		97 10
Jul 1	To Dr. for 1000 lbs of sugar		97 10
Aug 1	To Dr. for 1000 lbs of sugar		97 10
Sep 1	To Dr. for 1000 lbs of sugar		97 10
Oct 1	To Dr. for 1000 lbs of sugar		97 10
Nov 1	To Dr. for 1000 lbs of sugar		97 10
Dec 1	To Dr. for 1000 lbs of sugar		97 10
1778			
Jan 1	To Dr. for 1000 lbs of sugar		97 10
Feb 1	To Dr. for 1000 lbs of sugar		97 10
Mar 1	To Dr. for 1000 lbs of sugar		97 10
Apr 1	To Dr. for 1000 lbs of sugar		97 10
May 1	To Dr. for 1000 lbs of sugar		97 10
Jun 1	To Dr. for 1000 lbs of sugar		97 10
Jul 1	To Dr. for 1000 lbs of sugar		97 10
Aug 1	To Dr. for 1000 lbs of sugar		97 10
Sep 1	To Dr. for 1000 lbs of sugar		97 10
Oct 1	To Dr. for 1000 lbs of sugar		97 10
Nov 1	To Dr. for 1000 lbs of sugar		97 10
Dec 1	To Dr. for 1000 lbs of sugar		97 10
1779			
Jan 1	To Dr. for 1000 lbs of sugar		97 10
Feb 1	To Dr. for 1000 lbs of sugar		97 10
Mar 1	To Dr. for 1000 lbs of sugar		97 10
Apr 1	To Dr. for 1000 lbs of sugar		97 10
May 1	To Dr. for 1000 lbs of sugar		97 10
Jun 1	To Dr. for 1000 lbs of sugar		97 10
Jul 1	To Dr. for 1000 lbs of sugar		97 10
Aug 1	To Dr. for 1000 lbs of sugar		97 10
Sep 1	To Dr. for 1000 lbs of sugar		97 10
Oct 1	To Dr. for 1000 lbs of sugar		97 10
Nov 1	To Dr. for 1000 lbs of sugar		97 10
Dec 1	To Dr. for 1000 lbs of sugar		97 10

T th		Dollars	Cents
Jan	By Cash of Rob. Morris Esq. in piece of land	2	24 7 8
Feb 14	By Peter Godard of Maryland fellow voyage to Ark ^o of money put into his hands to pay the Bounty of some of the Eastern Regiments at Boston. in hand Oct 28/70		
Apr 11	By Cash of the Paymaster General	10 00	
	By Little - - - given Little	10 00	
<p>Ar. can. 1000</p> <p>1000 to the 1000 ar. can. (hand) carried in the Book of given in a book</p>		1000	1000

TWO PAGES FROM WASHINGTON'S PRIVATE EXPENSE BOOK

Notice that he began to reckon in dollars and cents immediately after independence was declared.

Having drank, he continued,

"I can not come to each of you to take my leave, but shall be obliged to you if each will come and take me by the hand."

Knox, who stood nearest to him, turned and grasped his hand, and, while the tears flowed down the cheeks of each the commander-in-chief kissed him. This he did to each of his officers, while tears and sobs stifled utterance.

Recollections of Washington, by His Adopted Son, George Washington Parke Custis, p. 420. Note by Benson J. Lossing, Editor.

Rendering His Account

On his way to Annapolis, Washington stopped for a few days at Philadelphia, where with his usual exactness in matters of business, he adjusted with the Comptroller of the Treasury his accounts from the commencement of the war down to the 13th of the actual month of December. These were all in his own handwriting, and kept in the cleanest and most accurate manner, each entry being accompanied by a statement of the occasion and object of the charge.

The gross amount was about fourteen thousand five hundred pounds sterling; in which were included moneys expended for secret intelligence and service, and in various incidental charges. All this, it must be noted, was an account of money actually expended in the progress of the war; not for arrearage of pay, for it will be recollected Washington accepted no pay. Indeed on the final adjustment of his accounts, he found himself a considerable loser, having frequently, in the hurry of business, neglected to credit himself with sums drawn from his private purse in moments of exigency.

The schedule of his public account furnishes not the least among the many noble and impressive lessons taught by his character and example. It stands a touchstone of

honesty in office, and a lasting rebuke on that lavish expenditure of the public money, too often heedlessly, if not wilfully, indulged in by military commanders.

Life of George Washington, Washington Irving, Vol. IV, p. 502.

“ How Small Ambitious Cæsar Seems! ”

All was over now, and Washington prepared to go to Annapolis and lay down his commission. . . . At Philadelphia he stopped a few days and adjusted his accounts, which he had in characteristic fashion kept himself in the neatest and most methodical way. He had drawn no pay, and had expended considerable sums from his private fortune, which he had omitted to charge to the government. The gross amount of his expenses was about 15,000 pounds sterling, including secret service and other incidental outlays. In these days of wild money-hunting, there is something worth pondering in this simple business settlement between a great general and his government, at the close of eight years of war. This done, he started again on his journey. From Philadelphia he proceeded to Annapolis, greeted with addresses and hailed with shouts at every town and village on his route, and having reached his destination, he addressed a letter to Congress on December 20th, asking when it would be agreeable to them to receive him. The 23d was appointed, and on that day, at noon, he appeared before Congress.

The following year a French orator and “*maître avocat*,” in an oration delivered at Toulouse upon the American Revolution, described this scene in these words: “On the day when Washington resigned his commission in the hall of Congress, a crown decked with jewels was placed upon the Book of the Constitutions. Suddenly Washington seizes it, breaks it, and flings the pieces to the assembled people. How small ambitious Cæsar seems beside the hero of America!”

George Washington, Henry Cabot Lodge, Vol. I, p. 337.

How He Must Have Longed to Laugh!

Washington's farewell address to his army was unlike most papers of similar purport; it was full of fatherly advice, all of which is better worth reading than any of the political utterances of to-day. His parting with his officers has frequently been described by pen and pencil, but as there was much hand-shaking and no talk it may even now be better imagined than described. In the same building, still standing, and then known as Fraunces' Tavern, many a solid, sober citizen has since swallowed glasses of bad liquor in memory of the hero, who, in an upper chamber of that old house, first broke down when he drank his last glass of wine with his old companions as a body.

Of farewell addresses Washington delivered about this time nearly as many as any actress who ever began to retire from the stage, but with this important difference: they all referred to the same event. Besides his general farewell to the army he wrote long letters to each governor on the state of the country; all of them will repay reading at the present day, for all were full of expressions of loyal pride in the new nation and of warning against sectional jealousies.

Finally he bade farewell to Congress, his address being verbal, by request of that body. His speeches were as famous for brevity as were his letters for length, yet the enterprising local journalist of the day, Congress being in session at Annapolis, remarked that "few tragedies ever drew so many tears from so many beautiful eyes as the moving manner in which his Excellency took his final leave of Congress." As reporters at that time seldom had a chance to "spread themselves," this rather exuberant sentence might be susceptible of some discount, had not several careful writers used even stronger language.

Washington's speech was certainly affecting, and his manner dignified, but how he must have longed to laugh when, in response to his short address, the reply of Congress

—and it was all that Washington could have desired—was spoken by Mifflin, who a few years before was a member of the detestable Conway cabal! “Time at last makes all things even.”

George Washington, John Habberton, p. 252.

Written Address on Resigning His Commission

“ANNAPOLIS, 23 December, 1783.

“*Mr. President:*

“The great events, upon which my resignation depended, having at length taken place, I have now the honor of offering my sincere congratulations to Congress, and of presenting myself before them, to surrender into their hands the trust committed to me, and to claim the indulgence of retiring from the Service of my Country.

“Happy in the confirmation of our Independence and Sovereignty, and pleased with the opportunity afforded the United States of becoming a respectable nation, I resign with satisfaction the appointment I accepted with diffidence; a diffidence in my abilities to accomplish so arduous a task, which, however, was superseded by a confidence in the rectitude of our cause, the support of the supreme Power of the Union, and the patronage of Heaven.

“The successful termination of the war has verified the most sanguine expectations; and my gratitude for the interposition of Providence, and the assistance I have received from my countrymen, increases with every review of the momentous contest.

“While I repeat my obligations to the army in general, I should do injustice to my own feelings not to acknowledge, in this place, the peculiar services and distinguished merits of the gentlemen, who have been attached to my person during the war. It was impossible that the choice of confidential officers to compose my family should have been more fortunate. Permit me, Sir, to recommend in particular



From the Painting by John Trumbull.

WASHINGTON RESIGNING HIS COMMISSION, DECEMBER 23, 1783

those, who have continued in service to the present moment, as worthy of the favorable notice and patronage of Congress.

"I consider it an indispensable duty to close this last solemn act of my official life, by commending the interests of our dearest country to the protection of Almighty God, and those who have the superintendence of them to His holy keeping.

"Having now finished the work assigned me, I retire from the great theatre of action; and, bidding an affectionate farewell to this august body, under whose orders I have so long acted, I here offer my commission, and take my leave of all the employments of public life."

Writings of George Washington, Edited by Lawrence B. Evans, Ph.D., p. 237.

Thackeray Contrasts the Two Georges

The scene was the hall of Congress. The members representing the sovereign power were seated and covered, while all the space about was filled by the governor and State officers of Maryland, by military officers, and by the ladies and gentlemen of the neighborhood, who stood in respectful silence with uncovered heads. Washington was introduced by the Secretary of Congress, and took a chair which had been assigned to him. There was a brief pause, and then the president said that "the United States in Congress assembled were prepared to receive his communication." . . .

In singularly graceful and eloquent words his old opponent, Thomas Mifflin, the president, replied, the simple ceremony ended, and Washington left the room a private citizen.

The great master of English fiction, touching this scene with skilful hand, has said:

"Which was the most splendid spectacle ever witnessed, the opening feast of Prince George in London, or the resignation of Washington? Which is the most noble character

for after ages to admire,—yon fribble dancing in laces and spangles, or yonder hero who sheathes his sword after a life of spotless honor, a purity unrepached, a courage indomitable, and a consummate victory?"

George Washington, Henry Cabot Lodge, Vol. I, p. 339.

Blessings on Thee!

Traitors shall perish and treason shall fail;
Kingdoms and thrones in thy glory shall pale!
Thou shalt live on, and thy people shall own
Loyalty's sweet when each heart is thy throne;
Union and freedom thine heritage be.
Country of Washington!—blessings on thee!

Lines by W. S. Robinson, *Washington's Birthday*, Edited by Robert Haven Schauffler, p. 132.

Americans victorious at Cowpens . . . January 17, 1781

Americans defeated at Guilford Court House,

March 15, 1781

Arnold's invasion of Virginia for the British, 1781

Cornwallis surrenders at Yorktown . . . October 19, 1781

Suspension of hostilities in War for Independence, 1782

Treaty of peace with Great Britain signed, Sep-

tember 3, 1783

CHAPTER XXIX

"THE CINCINNATUS OF THE WEST"

Mount Vernon Becomes a Mecca

Having resigned his commission, Washington stood not upon the order of his going, but went at once to Virginia, and reached Mount Vernon the next day, in season to enjoy the Christmas-tide at home. It was with a deep sigh of relief that he sat himself down again by his own fireside, for all through the war the one longing that never left his mind was for the banks of the Potomac. He loved home after the fashion of his race, but with more than common intensity, and the country life was dear to him in all its phases. He liked its quiet occupations and wholesome sports, and, like most strong and simple natures, he loved above all an open-air existence. He felt that he had earned his rest, with all the temperate pleasures and employments that came with it, and he fondly believed that he was about to renew the habits which he had abandoned for eight weary years. Four days after his return he wrote to Governor Clinton:

"The scene is at last closed. I feel myself eased of a load of public care. I hope to spend the remainder of my days in cultivating the affections of good men and in the practice of the domestic virtues."

That the hope was sincere we may well suppose, but that it was more than a hope may be doubted. It was a wish, not a belief, and Washington must have felt that there was work that he would surely be called to do. Still for the present the old life was there, and he threw himself into it with eager zest, though age and care put some of the former habits aside. He resumed his hunting, and Lafayette sent

him a pack of splendid French wolf-hounds. But they proved somewhat fierce and unmanageable, and were given up, and after that the following of the hounds was never resumed. In other respects there was little change. The work of the plantation and the affairs of the estate, much disordered by his absence, once more took shape and moved on successfully under the owner's eye. There were, as of old, the long days in the saddle, the open house and generous hospitality, the quiet evenings, and the thousand and one simple labors and enjoyments of rural life. But with all this were the newer and deeper cares, born of the change which had been wrought in the destiny of the country. The past broke in and could not be pushed aside, the future knocked at the door and demanded an answer to its questionings.

He had left home a distinguished Virginian; he returned one of the most famous men in the world, and such celebrity brought its usual penalties. Every foreigner of any position who came to the country made a pilgrimage to Mount Vernon, and many Americans did the same. Their coming was not allowed to alter the mode of life, but they were all hospitably received, and they consumed many hours of their host's precious time.

George Washington, Henry Cabot Lodge, Vol. II, p. 1.

“ Tell George to Come Here Instantly ! ”

On Christmas Eve, 1783, he was once more at Mount Vernon, to resume the life he loved more than victory and power. He had a zest for the means and the labor of succeeding, but not for the mere content of success. He put the Revolution behind him as he would have laid aside a book that was read; turned from it as quietly as he had turned from receiving the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown—interested in victory not as a pageant and field of glory, but only as a means to an end. He looked to find very sweet satisfaction in the peace which war had earned,

as sufficient a scope for his powers at home as in the field. Once more he would be a Virginian, and join his strength to his neighbors' in all the tasks of good citizenship. He had seen nothing of the old familiar places since that far-away spring of the year 1775, when he had left his farming and fox-hunting, amidst rumors of war, to attend the Congress which was to send him to Cambridge. He had halted at Fredericksburg, indeed, with the Count de Rochambeau, two years ago, ere he followed his army from York to his posts upon the Hudson. Mrs. Lewis, his sister, had returned one day from visiting a neighbor in the quiet town to look in astonishment upon an officer's horses and attendants at her door, and had entered to find her beloved brother stretched upon her own bed within, sound asleep in his clothes, like a boy returned from hunting. There had been a formal ball given, too, in celebration of the victory, before the French officers and the commander-in-chief left Fredericksburg to go northward again, and Washington had had the joy of entering the room in the face of the gay company with his aged mother on his arm, not a whit bent for all her seventy-four years, and as quiet as a queen at receiving the homage of her son's comrades in arms. A servant had told her that "Mars George" had put up at the tavern. "Go and tell George to come here instantly," she had commanded; and he had come, masterful man though he was. He had felt every old affection and every old allegiance as he saw former neighbors crowd around him; and that little glimpse of Virginia had refreshed him ilke a tonic—deeply, as if it renewed his very nature, as only a silent man can be refreshed. But a few days in Fredericksburg and at Mount Vernon then had been only an incident of campaigning, only a grateful pause on march. Now at last he had come back to keep his home and be a neighbor again, as he had not been these nine years.

From Virginian to American

No man of that time with the exception of Hamilton, ever grasped and realized as he did the imperial future which stretched before the United States. It was a difficult thing for men who had been born colonists to rise to a sense of national opportunities, but Washington passed at a single step from being a Virginian to being an American, and in so doing he stood alone. He was really and thoroughly national from the beginning of the war, at a time when, except for a few oratorical phrases, no one had ever thought of such a thing as a practical and living question. In the same way he had passed rapidly to an accurate conception of the probable growth and greatness of the country, and again he stood alone. Hamilton, born outside the colonies, unhampered by local prejudices and attachments, and living in Washington's family, as soon as he turned his mind to the subject, became, like his chief, entirely national and imperial in his views; but the other American statesmen of that day, with the exception of Franklin, only followed gradually and sometimes reluctantly in adopting their opinions. Some of them never adopted them at all, but remained embedded in local ideas, and very few got beyond the region of words and actually grasped the facts with the absolutely clear perception which Washington had from the outset. Thus it was that when the war closed one of the ruling ideas in Washington's mind was to assure the future which he saw opening before the country. He perceived at a glance that the key and the guarantee of that future were in the wild regions of the West. Hence his constant anxiety as to the western posts, as to our Indian policy, and as to the maintenance of a sufficient armed force upon our borders to check the aggressions of English or savages, and to secure free scope for settlement. In advancing these ideas on a national scale, however, he was rendered helpless by the utter weakness of

Congress, which even his influence was powerless to overcome. He therefore began, immediately after his retreat to private life, to formulate and bring into existence such practical measures as were possible for the development of the West, believing that if Congress could not act, the people would, if any opportunity were given to their natural enterprise.

George Washington, Henry Cabot Lodge, Vol. II, p. 7.

"Under My Own Vine and Fig-tree"

"Under my own vine and fig-tree" was the most attractive picture Washington's mind could conceive. During the war he referred many times to the happy day coming when he could return to private life. When he came back to Mount Vernon after eight years of toil, hazard, anxiety and exasperation, he felt that he had at last gained his reward—the privilege of passing the rest of his days in quiet with his family. The adulation of those who had once ridiculed or hampered him was a great satisfaction to him. People could at last see that Washington, and he alone, had saved the country.

But the country was still incoherent. The separate States relapsed into their former ways of thinking and acting. There was no head, no organization, no real sympathy. The country was like thirteen colonial staves without a hoop to hold them together. Washington saw this from the quiet of Mount Vernon and did his best to remedy existing conditions as he had done twenty years before, during the days of the Stamp Act. He was too philanthropic, too public spirited to keep aloof.

People nowadays seem to think life at Mount Vernon was a prosy, stilted existence. Nothing could be further from the truth. Washington was a great man to laugh, and a man of jovial humor. He appreciated a good story, and enjoyed a practical joke like an undergraduate. Judge Marshall tells a story which shows Washington in a new

light. It was about a predicament he and Washington's favorite nephew, Bushrod, got into. They were going to Mount Vernon, and stopped in a neighboring grove to take off their dusty clothes and make themselves fresh, clean and presentable on their arrival at the mansion. After they had taken off all their clothes and were ready for a body-servant to hand them clean apparel, he opened the port-manteau he had brought and was aghast to find in it only fancy soaps, tape, needles and the small wares of an itinerant pedler. At the last inn at which they had stopped the man had exchanged valises with a Scotch peddler. His rueful countenance made them laugh in spite of their own plight. Their laughter attracted the attention of Washington, who happened to be walking near, and he came to see what amused them. The two naked men, full of mirth and consternation, made signs deprecating their absurd predicament. Washington took in their dilemma at a glance and was so overcome by the ludicrousness of the situation that he actually rolled upon the ground, shouting with uncontrolled merriment at his friends' expense!

Many stories are told of his giving way to mirth after the greatest mental strain, even at Valley Forge, and during the darkest days of the war. A jackass given him by the King of Spain, was always a source of amusement. He compared the animal to and even had a mind to name the beast for the king, his former master.

A facetious writer says of him:

"Although we have been told that when Washington was six years old he could not tell a lie, yet he afterwards partially overcame the disability. On one occasion he writes to a friend that the mosquitoes of New Jersey can bite through the thickest boot."

This "authority" goes on to prove that Washington told white lies. He forgets that "all is fair in love and war," as in the case of the brilliant feints which deceived Clinton and permitted Washington to go to Virginia and then and

there end the war. This joker should be the last to complain because George Washington was the originator of the old joke about Jersey mosquitoes.

The Washington Story-Calendar, Wayne Whipple, December 4 to 10, 1910.

Van Braam Again, after Thirty Years

It was a curious circumstance, that scarce had Washington retired from the bustle of arms and hung up his sword at Mount Vernon, when he received a letter from the worthy who had first taught him the use of that sword in these very halls. In a word, Jacob Van Braam, his early teacher of the sword exercise, his fellow campaigner and unlucky interpreter in the affair of the Great Meadows, turned up once more. His letter gave a glance over the current of his life. It would appear that after the close of the French war, he had been allowed half pay in consideration of his services and misadventures; and, in process of time, had married, and settled on a farm in Wales with his wife and his wife's mother. He had carried with him to England a strong feeling in favor of America, and on the breaking out of the Revolution had been very free, and, as he seemed to think, eloquent and effective in speaking in all companies and at country meetings against the American war. Suddenly, as if to stop his mouth, he received orders from Lord Amherst, then commander-in-chief, to join his regiment (the 69th), in which he was appointed eldest captain in the 3d battalion. In vain he pleaded his rural occupations; his farm cultivated at so much cost, for which he was in debt, and which must go to ruin should he abandon it so abruptly. No excuse was admitted—he must embark and sail for East Florida, or lose his half pay. He accordingly sailed for St. Augustine in the beginning of 1776, with a couple of hundred recruits picked up in London, resolving to sell out of the army on the first opportunity. By a series of cross-purposes he was prevented from doing so until in 1779, having in the interim made a campaign in

Georgia. "He quitted the service," he adds, "with as much pleasure as ever a young man entered it."

He then returned to England and took up his residence in Devonshire; but his invincible propensity to talk against the ministry made his residence there uncomfortable. His next move, therefore, was to the old fertile province of Orleannois in France, where he was still living near Malesherbes, apparently at his ease, enjoying the friendship of the distinguished person of that name, and better versed, it is to be hoped, in the French language than when he officiated as interpreter in the capitulation at the Great Meadows. The worthy major appeared to contemplate with joy and pride the eminence to which his early pupil in the sword exercise had attained.

"Give me leave, sir, before I conclude," writes he, "to pour out the sentiments of my soul in congratulating you for your successes in the American contest; and in wishing you a long life, to enjoy the blessing of a great people whom you have been the chief instrument in freeing from bondage."

So disappears from the scene one of the earliest personages of our history.

Life of George Washington, Washington Irving, Vol. IV, p. 511.

Fine Clothes Do Not Make Fine Men

Although always very particular about his dress, Washington was no dandy, as some have supposed. "Do not," he wrote to his nephew in 1783, "conceive that fine clothes make fine men any more than fine feathers make fine birds. A plain, genteel dress, is more admired and obtains more credit than lace or embroidery in the eyes of the judicious and sensible."

Sullivan thus describes Washington at a levee: "He was dressed in black velvet, his hair full dress, powdered, and gathered behind in a large silk bag, yellow gloves on his hands; holding a cocked hat, with a cockade in it, and the

edges adorned with a black feather about an inch deep. He wore knee and shoe buckles, and a long sword. The scabbard was of white polished leather."

Washington's Birthday, Edited by Robert Haven Schaffler, p. 245.

Ploughs and Hunting

Like other country gentlemen of his time, he tried his inventive faculty with a new plough, and the diary describes the manufacture:

"March 6th.—Fitted a two-eyed plough, instead of a duck-billed plough, and with much difficulty made my chariot-wheel horses plough. 7th.—Put the pole-end horses into the plough in the morning, and put in the postilion and hind horses in the afternoon, but the ground being well swarded over, and very heavy ploughing, I repented putting them in at all, for fear it should give them a habit of stopping in the chariot."

The diaries have frequent allusions to success or failure in hunting. Washington delighted in the chase. Even in going to watch the works in parts of the estate where he supposed a fox might be started he would take the dogs with him. He was always a bold rider and a good horseman. It is recollected that, at the battle of Princeton, when he saw an English regiment give way, he turned to his staff and said, "An old-fashioned Virginia fox-hunt, gentlemen."

Life of George Washington Studied Anew, Edward Everett Hale, p. 127.

The Nephew and the Ice-house

The session of the Cincinnati did not detain him longer than May in Philadelphia. He came back to Mount Vernon to find, among other things, that his ice had not kept, or, as he says, that he was "lurched." A friendly letter to Robert Morris, asking his help for a nephew, a brother to the gentleman who became Judge Bushrod Washington, announces this misfortune:

"MOUNT VERNON, June 2, 1784.

. . . The inclination of the young gentleman also points to this walk of life; he is turned twenty; possesses, I am told (for he is a stranger to me), good natural abilities, an amiable disposition, and an uncommon share of prudence and circumspection.

"Would it suit you, my dear sir, to take him into your counting-house, and to afford him your patronage? If this is not convenient, who would you recommend for this purpose? What advance and what other requisites are necessary to initiate him? Excuse this trouble; to comply with the wishes of a parent anxious for the welfare of his children, I give it, and my friendship prompted it, but I wish you to be perfectly unembarrassed by the application, on either account.

"If General Armand should have left Philadelphia, you will oblige me by placing the enclosed in the readiest channel of conveyance. My affectionate regards, in which Mrs. Washington joins me, attend Mrs. Morris, yourself, and family. With every sentiment of friendship and pure esteem,

"I remain, dear sir, etc., etc.,

"G. WASHINGTON.

"P. S.—The house I filled with ice does not answer; it is gone already. If you will do me the favor to cause a description of yours to be taken—the size, manner of building, and mode of management,—and forward it to me, I shall be much obliged. My house was filled chiefly with snow. Have you ever tried snow? Do you think it is owing to this that I am lurched?"

Life of George Washington Studied Anew, Edward Everett Hale, p. 284.

The Fact Called "George Washington"

The scheme which he proposed was to open the western country by means of inland navigation. The thought had

long been in his mind. It had come to him before the Revolution, and can be traced back to the early days when he was making surveys, buying wild lands, and meditating very deeply, but very practically on the possible development of the colonies. Now the idea assumed much larger proportions and a much graver aspect. He perceived in it the first step toward the empire which he foresaw, and when he had laid down his sword and awoke in the peaceful morning at Mount Vernon, "with a strange sense of freedom from official cares," he directed his attention at once to this plan, in which he really could do something, despite an inert Congress and a dissolving confederation. His first letter on the subject was written in March, 1784, and addressed to Jefferson, who was then in Congress; and who sympathized with Washington's views without seeing how far they reached. He told Jefferson how he despaired of government aid, and how he therefore intended to revive the scheme of a company, which he had started in 1775, and which had been abandoned on account of the war. He showed the varying interests which it was necessary to conciliate, asked Jefferson to see the governor of Maryland, so that that State might be brought into the undertaking, and referred to the danger of being anticipated and beaten by New York, a chord of local pride which he continued to touch most adroitly as the business proceeded. Very characteristically, too, he took pains to call attention to the fact that by his ownership of land he had a personal interest in the enterprise. He looked far beyond his own lands, but he was glad to have his property developed, and with his usual freedom from anything like pretense, he drew attention to the fact of his personal interests.

The practical result was that the legislature took the question up, more in deference to the writer's wishes and in gratitude for his services, than from any comprehension of what the scheme meant. The companies were duly organized, and the promoter was given a hundred and fifty

shares, on the ground that the legislature wished to take every opportunity of testifying their sense of "the unexampled merits of George Washington towards his country." Washington was much touched and not a little troubled by this action. He had been willing, as he said, to give up his cherished privacy and repose in order to forward the enterprise. He had gone to Maryland even, and worked to engage that State in the scheme, but he could not bear the idea of taking money for what he regarded as part of a great public policy.

"I would wish," he said, "that every individual who may hear that it was a favorite plan of mine may know also that I had no other motive for promoting it than the advantage of which I conceived it would be productive to the Union, and to this State in particular, by cementing the eastern and western territory together, at the same time that it will give vigor and increase to our commerce, and be a convenience to our citizens.

"How would this matter be viewed, then, by the eye of the world, and what would be the opinion of it, when it comes to be related that George Washington has received twenty thousand dollars and five thousand pounds sterling of the public money as an interest therein?"

He thought it would make him look like a "pensioner or dependent" to accept this gratuity, and he recoiled from the idea. There is something entirely frank and human in the way in which he says "George Washington," instead of using the first pronoun singular. He always saw facts as they were, he understood the fact called "George Washington" as perfectly as any other, and although he wanted retirement and privacy, he had no mock modesty in estimating his own place in the world. At the same time, while he wished to be rid of the kindly gift, he shrank from putting on what he called the appearance of "ostentatious disinterestedness" by refusing it. Finally he took the stock and endowed two charity schools with the dividends.

The scheme turned out successfully, and the work still endures, like the early surveys and various other things of a very different kind to which Washington put his hand.

George Washington, Henry Cabot Lodge, Vol. II, p. 9.

Goes to Visit Lands on the Ohio and Kanawha Rivers

Washington now prepared for a tour to the west of the Appalachian Mountains, to visit his lands on the Ohio and Kanawha rivers. Dr. Craik, the companion of his various campaigns, and who had accompanied him in 1770 on a similar tour, was to be his fellow-traveler. The way they were to travel may be gathered from Washington's directions to the doctor:—"You will have occasion to take nothing from home but a servant to look after your horses, and such bedding as you may think proper to make use of. I will carry a marquee, some camp utensils, and a few stores. A boat, or some other kind of a vessel, will be provided for the voyage down the river, either at my place on the Youghiogheny or Fort Pitt, measures for this purpose have already been taken. A few medicines, and hooks and lines, you may probably want."

This soldier-like tour, made in hardy military style, with tent, pack-horses, and frugal supplies, took him once more among the scenes of his youthful expeditions when a land surveyor in the employ of Lord Fairfax; a leader of Virginia militia, or an aide-de-camp of the unfortunate Braddock. A veteran now in years, and a general renowned in arms, he soberly permitted his steed to pick his way across the mountains by the old military route, still called Braddock's road, over which he had spurred in the days of youthful ardor. His original intention had been to survey and inspect his lands on the Monongahela river; then to descend the Ohio to the great Kanawha, where he also had large tracts of wild land. On arriving at the Monongahela, however, he heard such accounts of discontent and irritation among the Indian tribes, that he did

not consider it prudent to venture among them. Some of his land on the Monongahela was settled; the rest was in the wilderness, and of little value in the present unquiet state of the country. He abridged his tour, therefore; proceeded no further west than the Monongahela; ascended that river, and then struck southward through the wild, unsettled regions of the Alleghanies, until he came out into the Shenandoah valley near Staunton. He returned to Mount Vernon on the 4th of October; having since the 1st of September traveled on horseback six hundred and eighty miles, for a great part of the time in wild, mountainous country, where he was obliged to encamp at night. This, like his tour to the northern forts with Governor Clinton, gave proof of his unfailing vigor and activity.

Life of George Washington, Washington Irving Vol. IV, p. 517.

From Washington's Diary of September, MDCC^{lxxxiv}

Set out about 7 O'clock with the Doct^r. (Craik) and his Son William, and my Nephew Bushrod Washington, who were to make the tour with us.—about ten I parted with them at 5 Miles Creek, & recrossed the Potomack (having passed it ab^t. 3 Miles from the Springs before) to a tract of mine on the Virginia Side which I find exceedingly Rich, & must be very valuable.—the lower end of the land is rich white oak in places springey; and in the winter wet.—the upper part is exceedingly rich, and covered with Walnut of considerable size many of them.—Note—I requested a M^r. M^c. Craker at whose House I fed my horses, & got a snack, & whose land joins mine—to offer mine to any who might apply for £10 the first year, £15 the next, & £25 the third—the Tenant not to remove any of the Walnut timber from off the Land; or to split it into Rails; as I should reserve that for my own use.—

After having reviewed this Land I again crossed the River & getting into the Waggon Road I pursued my

journey to the old Town where I overtook my Company & Baggage—lodged at Col. Cresaps—ab^t. 35 Miles this day

9th.

Having discharged the hired Horses which were obtained at the springs & hired one more *only* to supply the place of one of mine, whose back was much hurt, we had them loaded by Six oclock, and was about to set out when it began to Rain; which looking very likely to continue thro the day, I had the Loads taken off to await the issue.—

at this place I met a Man who lives at the Mouth of ten Miles Creek on Monongahela, who assured me, that this Creek is not Navigable for any kind of a Craft a Mile from its Mouth; unless the Water of it is swelled by Rain; at which time he has known Batteaux brought 10 or 12 Miles down it.—He knows little of the Country betwⁿ. that and the little Kanahwa—& and not more of that above him, on the Monongahela.—

The day proving rainy we remained here.—

Washington and the West, Archer Butler Hulbert, p. 37.

"Big with Great Political as Well as Commercial Consequences"

Ah, says some critic in critic's fashion, you are carried away by your subject; you see in a simple business enterprise, intended merely to open western lands, the far-reaching ideas of a statesman. Perhaps our critic is right, for as one goes on living with this Virginian soldier, studying his letters and his thoughts, one comes to believe many things of him, and to detect much meaning in his sayings and doings. Let us, however, show our evidence at least. Here is what he wrote to his friend Humphreys a year after his scheme was afoot: "My attention is more immediately engaged in a project which I think big with great political as well as commercial consequences to the States, especially the middle ones"; and then he went on to argue the necessity of fastening the Western States to the Atlantic seaboard

and thus thwarting Spain and England. This looks like more than a money-making scheme; in fact, it justifies all that has been said, especially if read in connection with certain other letters of this period. Great political results, as well as lumber and peltry, were what Washington intended to float along his rivers and canals.

In this same letter to Humphreys he touched also on another point in connection with the development of the West, which was of vast importance to the future of the country, and was even then agitating men's minds. He said:

"I may be singular in my ideas, but they are these: that to open a door to, and make easy the way for those settlers to the westward, (who ought to advance regularly and compactly) before we make any stir about the navigation of the Mississippi, and before our settlements are far advanced toward that river, would be our true line of policy."

Again he wrote:

"However singular the opinion may be, I cannot divest myself of it, that the navigation of the Mississippi, *at this time* [1785], ought to be no object with us. On the contrary, until we have a little time allowed to open and make easy the ways between the Atlantic States and the western territory, the obstructions had better remain."

He was right in describing himself as "singular" in his views on this matter, which was just then exciting much attention.

George Washington, Henry Cabot Lodge, Vol. II, p. 13.

The Long-expected Visit of Lafayette

The long-expected visit of Lafayette took place in the autumn of 1784, but the Marchioness was not with him. He arrived at Mount Vernon on the 17th of August, and remained there twelve days. During that time Mount Vernon was crowded with other guests who came to meet him, and when he left for Baltimore a large cavalcade of Virginia gentlemen accompanied him on his way. Among

other offerings from Europe Lafayette brought Washington a letter from Mesmer, the great charlatan to whom we owe the word "mesmerism," as related to the science which is yet unexplained. Washington's answer is amusing, as showing his faculty for saying something when he had to say it but had nothing to say.

"The Marquis of Lafayette did me the honor of presenting to me your favor of the 16th of June, and of entering into some explanation of the powers of magnetism, the discovery of which, if it should prove as extensively beneficial as it is said it will, must be fortunate indeed for mankind, and redound very highly to the honor of that genius to whom it owes its birth. For the confidence reposed in me by the society which you have formed for the purpose of diffusing all the advantages expected, and for your favorable sentiments of me, I pray you to receive my gratitude and the assurances of the respect and esteem with which I have the honor to be, etc., etc."

To the Marchioness Lafayette, when her husband returns, he writes:

"The Marquis returns to you with all the warmth and ardor of a newly inspired lover. We restore him to you in good health, crowned with wreaths of love and respect from every part of the Union. That his meeting with you, his family, and friends, may be propitious, and as happy as your wishes can make it, that you may live long together, revered and beloved, and that you may transmit to a numerous progeny the virtues which you both possess, is the fervent wish of your devoted and most respectful humble servant.

"N. B.—In every good wish for you, Mrs. Washington sincerely joins me."

Lafayette and his heirs male, were, by special statutes, made citizens of Maryland and of Virginia.

The Life of George Washington Studied Anew, Edward Everett Hale, p. 280.

Lafayette Goes to See the Mother of Washington

In 1784 the Marquis de Lafayette came back to Virginia "crowned everywhere," as Washington wrote to the Marchioness de Lafayette, "with wreaths of love and respect." He visited Mount Vernon, and from there he went to Fredericksburg to pay his respects to the mother of Washington, before returning to France. A multitude of citizens and soldiers crowded into town to do him honor. One of the old soldiers from the country had heard much of a new character who had followed the armies, and had lately appeared in Virginia—active, prevalent, and most successful. This man was bound to see Lafayette, "pickpocket" or no "pickpocket." Had he not hands? One should always keep a firm grasp on the watch in his pocket. He succeeded, after pushing through the crowd, in reaching the general. In his enthusiasm at being greeted so warmly by the great marquis, he seized both Lafayette's hands in his own. The nobleman was not to be outdone in politeness by the countryman. After a friendly interview the latter clapped his hand on his exposed watch-pocket. It was empty. Yet the honest fellow did not think his honor too dearly bought.

After shaking hands with the crowds, an undertaking the marquis keenly enjoyed, he found Washington's sister Betty's son ready to guide the French nobleman to the home of the mother of his great friend.

"Accompanied by her grandson," says Mr. Custis, "he approached the house; when the young gentleman observed, 'There, sir, is my grandmother.' Lafayette beheld, working in the garden, clad in domestic-made clothes, and her gray head covered with a plain straw hat, the mother of his hero. The lady saluted him kindly, observing, 'Ah, Marquis, you see an old woman; but come, I can make you welcome to my poor dwelling without the parade of changing my dress.'

"The Marquis spoke of the happy effects of the Revolution, and the goodly prospect which opened upon independent America; stated his speedy departure for his native land; paid the tribute of his heart, his love and admiration of her illustrious son. To the encomiums which he had lavished upon his hero and paternal chief, the matron replied in her accustomed words, 'I am not surprised at what George has done, for he was always a very good boy.'

"In her latter days, the mother often spoke of 'her own good boy,' of the merits of his early life, of his love and dutifulness to herself; but of the deliverer of his country, the chief magistrate of the great republic, she never spoke. Call you this insensibility? or want of ambition? Oh, no! her ambition had been gratified to overflowing. She had taught him to be good; that he became great when the opportunity presented, was a consequence, not a cause."

W. W.

" Nothing Left but Obey "

During the war, and indeed during her useful life, and until within three years of her death, when an afflictive disease prevented exertion, the mother of Washington set a most valuable example in the management of her domestic concerns, carrying her own keys, bustling in her household affairs, providing for her own wants, and living and moving in all the pride of independence. There are some of the aged inhabitants of Fredericksburg who well remember the matron as, seated in an old-fashioned open chaise, she was in the habit of almost daily visiting her little farm in the vicinity of the town. When there, she would ride about her fields, giving her orders, and seeing that they were obeyed. On one occasion an agent to whom she had given directions as to a particular piece of work, varied from his instructions in its execution. The lady, whose *coup d'oeil* was as perfect in rural affairs as that of her son in war, pointed out the

error. The agent excused himself by saying, that "in his judgment the work was done to more advantage than it would have been by his first directions." Mrs. Washington replied, "And pray, who gave you any exercise of judgment in the matter? I command you, sir; there is nothing left for you to do but obey."

In a very humble dwelling, at the advanced age of eighty-two, and suffering under an excruciating disease (cancer of the breast), thus lived this mother of the first of men, preserving unchanged her peculiar nobleness and independence of character. She was continually visited and solaced by her children and numerous grandchildren, particularly her daughter, Mrs. Lewis. To the repeated and earnest solicitations of this lady, that she would remove to her house and pass the remainder of her days; to the pressing entreaties of her son that she would make Mount Vernon the home of her old age, the matron replied: "I thank you for your affectionate and dutiful offers, but my wants are few in this world, and I feel perfectly confident to take care of myself." Upon her son-in-law, Colonel Fielding Lewis, proposing that he should relieve her in the direction of her affairs, she observed: "Do you, Fielding, keep my books in order, for your eyesight is better than mine, but leave the executive management to me."

Recollections of Washington, by His Adopted Son, George Washington Parke Custis,
p. 139.

Marriage Congratulations, Humorous but Hearty

Washington's ideas on marriage reflect his personal experience as well as his thoughtful observation of that of others. To a nephew he wrote as follows on this important question:

"If Mrs. Washington should survive me, there is a moral certainty of my dying without issue: and should I be the longest liver, the matter in my opinion, is hardly less certain; for while I retain the faculty of reasoning, I



Engraved by H. B. Hall after Picture from Life by Robert Edge Pine.

PORTRAIT OF WASHINGTON IN 1785

shall never marry a girl; and it is not probable that I should have children by a woman of an age suitable to my own, should I be disposed to enter into a second marriage."

In a more jocular strain he wrote to the Marquis de Chastellux:

I was, as you may well suppose, not less delighted than surprised to meet the plain American words, 'my wife.' A wife! Well, my dear Marquis, I can hardly refrain from smiling to find you are caught at last. I saw, by the eulogium you often made on the happiness of domestic life in America, that you had swallowed the bait, and that you would as surely be taken, one day or another, as that you were a philosopher and a soldier. So your day has at length come! I am glad of it, with all my heart and soul. It is quite good enough for you. Now you are well served for coming to fight in favor of the American rebels, all the way across the Atlantic Ocean, by catching that terrible contagion—domestic felicity—which same, like the small-pox or the plague, a man can have only once in his life; because it commonly lasts him (at least with us in America—I don't know how you manage these matters in France) for his whole life time. And yet after all these maledictions you so richly merit on the subject, the worst wish which I can find in my heart to make against Madame de Chastellux and yourself is, that you may neither of you ever get the better of this same domestic felicity during the entire course of your mortal existence."

W. W.

"Standing at My Bedside with a Bowl of Hot Tea"

An observant traveler, Mr. Elkanah Watson, who visited Mount Vernon in the winter of 1785, bearer of a letter of introduction from General Greene and Colonel Fitzgerald, gives a home picture of Washington in his retirement. Though sure that his credentials would secure him a respectful reception, he says: "I trembled with

awe, as I came into the presence of this great man. I found him at table with Mrs. Washington and his private family, and was received in the native dignity, and with that urbanity so peculiarly combined in the character of a soldier and an eminent private gentleman. He soon put me at my ease, by unbending, in a free and affable conversation."

In the evening Mr. Watson sat conversing for a full hour with Washington after all the family had retired, expecting, perhaps, to hear him fight over some of his battles; but, if so, he was disappointed, for he observes: "He modestly waived all allusions to the events in which he had acted so glorious and conspicuous a part. Much of his conversation had reference to the interior country, and to the opening of the navigation of the Potomac by canals and locks, at the Seneca, the Great and Little Falls. His mind appeared to be deeply absorbed by that object, then in earnest contemplation."

Mr. Watson had taken a severe cold in the course of a harsh winter journey, and coughed excessively. Washington pressed him to take some remedies, but he declined. After retiring for the night his coughing increased. "When some time had elapsed," writes he, "the door of my room was gently opened, and, on drawing my bed curtains, I beheld Washington himself, standing at my bedside with a bowl of hot tea in his hand. I was mortified and distressed beyond expression. This little incident occurring in common life with an ordinary man, would not have been noticed; but as a trait of the benevolence and private virtue of Washington, deserves to be recorded."

Life of George Washington, Washington Irving, Vol. IV, p. 534.

The General "Parted with" His Pack!

Although somewhat faded was the huntsman's bravery of blue and scarlet worn in the gala-days of yore, the man inside of it sat with the old ease upon his fiery Blueskin—Will Lee, on "Chinkling," closely following. These two

rode straight forward, over brake and brier, from sunrise, when the gray fox of Virginia was unkenneled, till—no matter what hour—the fate of her ladyship was settled, and her followers drew rein before one house or the other of her belongings, to seek pot-luck. Custis said that Washington required of a horse "but one good quality, and that was to go along. He ridiculed the idea that he could be unhorsed, provided the animal kept on his legs."

The hounds used in these latter days of chase were a pack sent, in 1785, to Mount Vernon by Lafayette. A fierce, big-mouthed, savage breed, absolutely disproportioned to their prey, were the French dogs, built to grapple with the stag in his death-agony, or with the maddened boar. Mrs. Washington never fancied having such monsters near the house, and after one of them, Vulcan by name, was discovered in the act of carrying off a ham, just out of the oven, their reign was short. The General soon after "parted with" his pack!

Washington at Mount Vernon, after the Revolution, Constance Cary Harrison, The Century Magazine, New Series, Vol. XV, April, 1889, p. 835.

Last Days of Nelson, the War Horse

One ceremony of his daily round—for, rain, or shine, he made the circuit of his farms, between twelve and fifteen miles—was, in season, never omitted by the chief. It was to lean over the fence around the field wherein a tall, old sorrel horse, with white face and legs, was grazing luxuriously in the richest grass and clover Mount Vernon could afford. At the sight of him the old steed would prick up his ears and run neighing to arch his neck beneath his master's hand. This was Nelson, the war-horse upon whose back, at Yorktown, the commander-in-chief of the American armies had received the surrender of Lord Cornwallis. The war ended, Nelson's work was over. Turned out to graze in summer, in winter carefully groomed and stabled, he lived to a good old age, but by his master's strict command was never again allowed to feel the burden of a saddle.

Washington at Mount Vernon, after the Revolution, Constance Cary Harrison, The Century Magazine, New Series, Vol. XV, April, 1889, p. 840.

Head of the Society of the Cincinnati

Then there were the artists and sculptors, who came to paint his portrait or model his bust.

"*In for a penny, in for a pound* is an old adage," he wrote to Hopkinson in 1785. "I am so hackneyed to the touches of painters' pencils that I am now altogether at their beck, and sit 'like patience on a monument,' whilst they are delineating the lines of my face. It is a proof, among many others, of what habit and custom can accomplish."

Then there were the people who desired to write his memoirs, and the historians who wished to have his reminiscences, in their accounts of the Revolution. Some of these admiring and inquiring souls came in person, while others assailed him by letter and added to the vast flood of correspondence which poured in upon him by every post. His correspondence, in fact, in the needless part of it, was the most formidable waste of his time. He seems to have formed no correct idea of his own fame and what it meant, for he did not have a secretary until he found not only that he could not arrange his immense mass of papers, but that he could not even keep up with his daily letters. His correspondence came from all parts of his own country, and of Europe as well. The French officers who had been his companions in arms wrote him with affectionate interest, and he was urged by them, one and all, and even by the king and queen, to visit France. These were letters which he was only too happy to answer, and he would fain have crossed the water in response to their kindly invitation; but he professed himself too old, which was a mere excuse, and objected his ignorance of the language, which to a man of his temperament was a real obstacle. Besides these letters of friendship, there were schemers everywhere who sought his counsel and assistance. The notorious Lady Huntington, for example, pursued him with her project of Christianizing the Indians by means of a missionary

colony in our western region, and her persistent ladyship cost him a good deal of time and thought, and some long and careful letters. Then there was the inventor Rumsey, with his steamboat, to which he gave careful attention, as he did to everything that seemed to have merit. Another class of correspondents were his officers, who wanted his aid with Congress and in a thousand other ways, and to these old comrades he never turned a deaf ear. In this connection also came the affairs of the Society of the Cincinnati. He took an active part in the formation of the society, he became its head, and he steered it through its early difficulties, and saved it from the wreck with which it was threatened by unreasoning popular prejudice. All these things were successfully managed; but at much expense of time and labor.

George Washington, Henry Cabot Lodge, Vol. II, p. 3.

His Strong Affection for Mount Vernon

A visitor to Mount Vernon in 1785 states that his host's "greatest pride is, to be thought the first farmer in America. He is quite a Cincinnati."

Undoubtedly a part of this liking flowed from his strong affection for Mount Vernon. Such was his feeling for the place that he never seems to have been entirely happy away from it, and over and over again, during his enforced absences, he "sighs" or "pants" for his "own vine and fig-tree." In writing to an English correspondent, he shows his feeling for the place by saying, "No estate in United America, is more pleasantly situated than this. It lies in a high, dry and healthy country, three hundred miles by water from the sea, and, as you will see by the plan, on one of the finest rivers in the world."

The history of the Mount Vernon estate begins in 1674, when Lord Culpeper conveyed to Nicholas Spencer and Lieutenant-colonel John Washington five thousand acres of land "scytuate Lying and being within the said terrytory in the County of Stafford in the ffreshes of the Potto-

mocke River and bounded betwixt two Creeks." Colonel John's half was bequeathed to his son Lawrence, and by Lawrence's will it was left to his daughter Mildred. She sold it to the father of George, who by his will left it to his son Lawrence, with a reversion to George should Lawrence die without issue. The original house was built about 1740, and the place was named Mount Vernon by Lawrence, in honor of Admiral Vernon, under whom he had served at Carthage. After the death of Lawrence, the estate of twenty-five hundred acres came under Washington's management, and from 1754 it was his home, as it had been practically even in his brother's life.

Twice Washington materially enlarged the house at Mount Vernon, the first time in 1760 and the second in 1785, and a visitor reports, that "it's a pity he did not build a new one at once, for it has cost him nearly as much to repair his old one." These alterations consisted in the addition of a banquet-hall at one end (by far the finest room in the house), and a library and dining-room at the other, with the addition of an entire story to the whole.

The grounds, too, were very much improved. A fine approach, or bowling green, was laid out, a "botanical garden," a "shrubbery," and greenhouses were added, and in every way possible the place was improved. A deer paddock was laid out and stocked, gifts of Chinese pheasants and geese, French partridges, and guinea-pigs were sent him, and were gratefully acknowledged, and from all the world over came curious, useful, or beautiful plants.

The True George Washington, Paul Leicester Ford, p. 113.

"Four Dollars to Be Drunk Four Days and Four Nights"

All the busy life of the negro world was regulated by his personal directions to overseers and bailiffs. No item was too insignificant to bring to his notice, the minutest contract for work agreed upon was put into writing. How curious, for example, the agreement with Philip Barter, the gardener,

found among Washington's papers, wherein Philip binds himself to keep sober for a year, and to fulfill his duties on the place, if allowed “four dollars at Christmas, with which to be drunk four days and four nights; two dollars at Easter, to effect the same purpose; two dollars at Whitsuntide, to be drunk for two days, a dram in the morning, and a drink of grog at dinner, at noon. For the true and faithful performance of all these things, the parties have hereunto set their hands, this twenty-third day of April, Anno Domini, 1787.

“PHILIP BARTER his
X
mark

“GEORGE WASHINGTON”

“Witness:

“George A. Washington,

“Tobias Lear.”

Washington at Mount Vernon, after the Revolution, Constance Cary Harrison, *The Century Magazine*, New Series, Vol. XV, April, 1889, p. 838.

The Name of Washington

Where may the wearied eye repose
When gazing on the great,
Where neither guilty glory glows
Nor despicable state?
Yes,—one, the first, the last, the best,
The Cincinnatus of the West,
Whom envy dared not hate,
Bequeathed the name of Washington
To make men blush there was but one.

Ode to Napoleon Bonaparte, *Poetry of Byron*, Chosen and Arranged by Matthew Arnold, p. 56.

CHAPTER XXX

THE THIRTEEN BECOME UNITED STATES

Without a Single Hoop to Hold Us Together

But though America had won her independence, she had not secured harmony and union. While the war lasted the States fought like brothers, side by side; now that the danger was over, they threatened to fall apart. We were like a barrel made of thirteen stout staves, but yet without a single hoop to hold us together. Under the Articles of Federation or Constitution adopted in 1781, the nation had no President—no head. It had only a Congress, and that Congress was destitute of power. It might pass good and useful laws, but it could not compel the people to obey them. It might beg the people to give money, but it could not make them furnish it. It might ask for soldiers to defend the country, but it could not draft them.

The truth is, that the people had come out of the war in a distressed condition. They were heavily in debt. Business was at a standstill. Gold and silver coin was scarce. The States had an abundance of paper stuff which pretended to be money, but nobody knew what it was worth, and what passed for a dollar in one State might not pass at all in another. Distress and discontent grew worse and worse. The States quarreled with each other about boundary lines, about commerce, about trade. Instead of being a united and friendly people, they were fast getting to be thirteen hostile nations ready to draw the sword against each other.

This feeling was shown in the fact that a man could not buy and sell freely outside of his own State. If, for instance, a farmer in New Jersey took a load of potatoes to

New York, he might have to pay a tax of five or ten cents a bushel to that State before he could offer them for sale. On the other hand, if a New York merchant sent a case of boots to New Jersey to sell to the farmers, that State might, if it chose, tax him ten cents a pair before he could get a permit to dispose of his goods.

The Leading Facts of American History, D. H. Montgomery, p. 189.

"Let Us Know the Worst at Once"

It is interesting to observe the ease and certainty with which, in dealing with the central question, he grasped all phases of the subject and judged of the effect of the existing weakness with regard to every relation of the country and to the politics of each State. He pointed out again and again the manner in which we were exposed to foreign hostility, and analyzed the designs of England, rightly detecting a settled policy on her part to injure and divide where she failed to conquer. Others were blind to the meaning of the English attitude as to the western posts, commerce, and international relations. Washington brought it to the attention of our leading men, educating them on this as on other points, and showing too, the stupidity of Great Britain in her attempt to belittle the trade of a country which, as he wrote Lafayette in prophetic vein, would one day "have weight in the scale of empires."

He followed with the same care the course of events in the several States. In them all he resisted the craze for issuing irredeemable paper money, writing to his various correspondents, and urging energetic opposition to this specious and pernicious form of public dishonesty. It was to Massachusetts, however, that his attention was most strongly attracted by the social disorders which culminated in the Shays rebellion. There the miserable condition of public affairs was bearing bitter fruit, and Washington watched the progress of the troubles with profound anxiety. He wrote to Lee:

"You talk, my good sir, of employing influence to appease the present tumults in Massachusetts. I know not where that influence is to be found, or, if attainable, that it would be a proper remedy for the disorders. *Influence is not government.* Let us have a government by which our lives, liberties, and properties will be secured, or let us know the worst at once."

Through "all this mist of intoxication and folly," however, Washington saw that the Shays insurrection would probably be the means of frightening the indifferent, and of driving those who seemed impervious to every appeal to reason into an active support of some better form of government. He rightly thought that a riot and bloodshed would prove convincing arguments.

George Washington, Henry Cabot Lodge, Vol. II, p. 25.

Washington's Word Was Law

Washington's personal influence was very great, something we of this generation with a vast territory and sixty millions of people, cannot readily understand. To many persons his word was law; to all that was best in the community, everything he said had immense weight. This influence he used with care and without waste. Every blow he struck went home. It is impossible to estimate just how much he effected, but it is safe to say that it is to Washington, aided first by Hamilton and then by Madison, that we owe the development of public opinion and the formation of the party which devised and carried the Constitution. Events of course worked with them, but they used events, and did not suffer the golden opportunities, which without them would have been lost, to slip by.

When Washington wrote of the Shays rebellion to Lee, the movement toward a better union, which he had begun, was on the brink of success. That ill-starred insurrection became, as he foresaw, a powerful spur to the policy started at Mount Vernon, and adopted by Virginia and Maryland.



Robert Morris



Thomas Jefferson



John Adams

THREE PILLARS OF THE NEW REPUBLIC

From this had come the Annapolis convention, and thence the call for another convention at Philadelphia. As soon as the word went abroad that a general convention was to be held, the demand for Washington as a delegate was heard on all sides. At first he shrank from it. Despite the work which he had been doing, and which he must have known would bring him once more into public service, he clung to the vision of home life which he had brought with him from the army. November 18, 1786, he wrote to Madison, that from a sense of obligation he should go to the convention, were it not that he had declined on account of his retirement, age, and rheumatism, to be at a meeting of the Cincinnati at the same time and place. But no one heeded him, and Virginia elected him unanimously to head her delegation at Philadelphia. He wrote to Governor Randolph, acknowledging the honor, but reiterating what he had said to Madison, and urging the choice of some one else in his place. Still Virginia held the question open, and on February 3d he wrote to Knox that his private intention was not to attend. The pressure continued, and, as usual when the struggle drew near, the love of battle and the sense of duty began to reassert themselves. March 8th he again wrote to Knox that he had not meant to come, but that the question had occurred to him, "Whether my non-attendance in the convention will not be considered as dereliction of republicanism; nay, more, whether other motives may not, however injuriously, be ascribed for my not exerting myself on this occasion in support of it"; and therefore he wished to be informed as to the public expectation on the matter. On March 28th he wrote again to Randolph that ill health might prevent his going, and therefore it would be well to appoint some one in his place. April 3d he said that if representation of the States was to be partial, or powers cramped, he did not want to be a sharer in the business. "If the delegates assemble," he wrote, "with such powers as will enable the convention to probe the defects of the Constitution to the

bottom and point out radical cures, it would be an honorable employment; otherwise not." This idea of inefficiency and failure in the convention had long been present to his mind, and he had already said that if their powers were insufficient, the convention should go boldly over and beyond, and make a government with the means of coercion, and able to enforce obedience, without which it would be, in his opinion, quite worthless. Thus he pondered on the difficulties, and held back his acceptance of the post; but when the hour of action drew near, the rheumatism and the misgivings alike disappeared before the inevitable, and Washington arrived in Philadelphia, punctual as usual, on May 13th, the day before the opening of the convention.

George Washington, Henry Cabot Lodge, Vol. II, p. 28.

"Thirteen Sovereignties Pulling against Each Other!"

To Madison he wrote: "How melancholy is the reflection that in so short a time we should have made such large strides towards fulfilling the predictions of our trans-Atlantic foes! 'Leave them to themselves, and their government will soon dissolve.' Will not the wise and good strive hard to avert this evil? Or will their supineness suffer ignorance and the arts of self-interested and designing, disaffected and desperate characters, to involve this great country in wretchedness and contempt? What stronger evidence can be given of the want of energy in our government than these disorders? If there is not power in it to check them, what security has a man for life, liberty or property? To you, I am sure I need not add aught on the subject. The consequences of a lax or inefficient government are too obvious to be dwelt upon. Thirteen sovereignties pulling against each other, and all tugging at the federal head, will soon bring ruin on the whole; whereas, a liberal and energetic constitution, well checked and well watched, to prevent encroachments, might restore us to that degree of respectability and consequence to which we had the fairest prospect of attaining."

Great as Washington was, he occasionally made mistakes, and one of these was, that the people had forgotten him. Ambitious politicians let him alone, for there was no hope for them if he was prominent; some unselfish patriots thought he had enjoyed as much honor and power as any man could safely be trusted with, but all these together were but a handful to the mass who believed little in theories but much in men. The sentiments of these were clearly expressed when Col. Humphreys, once his *aide-de-camp*, wrote: "In case of civil discord, I have already told you it was seriously my opinion that you could not remain neuter, and that you would be obliged, in self-defense, to take one part or the other, or withdraw from the continent. Your friends are of the same opinion."

It may be safely assumed that Washington had no intention of withdrawing from the continent, and that Humphreys' opinion braced his spirits and comforted the wounds of his self-esteem. Another evidence of the public regard was soon tendered him; a convention, afterward known as the Constitutional Convention, had been arranged for, each State to send delegates to consult upon the defects of the federal system, and to suggest improvements, the suggestions to be forwarded to Congress and the State governments for such further action as might be advisable. Washington was, by a unanimous vote, put at the head of the Virginia delegation, and when enough delegates had assembled at Philadelphia to form a quorum, they, by unanimous vote, made Washington the permanent chairman of the convention.

George Washington, John Habberton, p. 169.

The Patient President of the Constitutional Convention

When a quorum was finally obtained, Washington was unanimously chosen to preside over the convention; and there he sat during the sessions of four months, silent, patient, except on a single occasion, taking no part in de-

bate, but guiding the business, and using all his powers with steady persistence to compass the great end. The debates of that remarkable body have been preserved in outline in the full and careful notes of Madison. Its history has been elaborately written, and the arguments and opinions of its members have been minutely examined and unsparingly criticised. We are still ignorant, and shall always remain ignorant, of just how much was due Washington for the final completion of the work. His general views and his line of action are clearly to be seen in his letters and in the words attributed to him by Morris. That he labored day and night for success we know, and that his influence with his fellow-members was vast we also know, but the rest we can only conjecture. There came a time when everything was at a standstill, and when it looked as if no agreement could be reached by the men representing so many conflicting interests. Hamilton had made his great speech and, finding the vote of his State cast against him by his two colleagues on every question, had gone home in a frame of mind which we may easily believe was neither very contented nor very sanguine. Even Franklin, most hopeful and buoyant of men, was nearly ready to despair. Washington himself wrote to Hamilton, on July 10th:

"When I refer you to the state of the counsels which prevailed at the period you left this city, and add that they are now, if possible, in a worse train than ever, you will find but little ground on which the hope of a good establishment can be formed. In a word, I almost despair of seeing a favorable issue to the proceedings of our convention, and do therefore repent having had any agency in the business."

Matters were certainly in a bad state when Washington could write in this strain, and when his passion for success was so cooled that he repented of agency in the business. There was much virtue, however, in that little word "almost." He did not quite despair yet, and, after his fashion, he held on with grim tenacity. We know what the compromises

finally were, and how they were brought about, but we can never do exact justice to the iron will which held men together when all compromises seemed impossible, and which even in the darkest hour would not wholly despair. All that can be said is, that without the influence and the labors of Washington the convention of 1787, in all probability, would have failed of success.

At all events it did not fail, and after much tribulation the work was done. On September 17, 1787, a day ever to be memorable, Washington affixed his bold and handsome signature to the Constitution of the United States. Tradition has it that as he stood by the table, pen in hand, he said:

"Should the States reject this excellent Constitution, the probability is that opportunity will never be offered to cancel another in peace; the next will be drawn in blood."

Whether the tradition is well or ill founded, the sentence has the ring of truth. A great work had been accomplished. If it were cast aside, Washington knew that the sword and not the pen would make the next Constitution and he regarded that awful alternative with dread. He signed first and was followed by all the members present, with three notable exceptions. Then the delegates dined together at the city tavern, and took a cordial leave of each other.

"After which," the president of the convention wrote in his diary, "I returned to my lodgings, did some business with, and received some papers from, the secretary of the convention, and retired to meditate upon the momentous work which had been executed."

George Washington, Henry Cabot Lodge, Vol. 11, p. 33.

"I Almost Despair of Seeing a Favorable Issue"

(The whole letter to Alexander Hamilton).

"PHILADELPHIA, 10 July, 1787.

"Dear Sir,

"I thank you for your communication of the 3d. When I refer you to the state of the counsels, which prevailed at

the period you left this city, and add that they are now if possible in a worse train than ever, you will find but little ground on which the hope of a good establishment can be formed. In a word, I almost despair of seeing a favorable issue to the proceedings of our convention, and do therefore repent having had any agency in the business.

"The men, who oppose a strong and energetic government, are in my opinion narrow-minded politicians, or are under the influence of local views. The apprehension expressed by them, that the *people* will not accede to the form proposed, is the *ostensible*, not the *real* cause of opposition. But, admitting that the present sentiment is as they prognosticate, the proper question ought nevertheless to be, Is it, or is it not, the best form such a country as this can adopt? If it be the best recommend it, and it will assuredly obtain, maugre opposition. I am sorry you went away. I wish you were back. The crisis is equally important and alarming, and no opposition, under such circumstances, should discourage exertions till the signature is offered. I will not at this time trouble you with more than my best wishes and sincere regard.

"I am, dear Sir," &c.,

[G. WASHINGTON.]

Writings of Washington, Edited by Lawrence B. Evans, Ph.D., p. 280.

"Little Short of a Miracle!"

"It appears to me little short of a miracle that the delegates from so many States, different from each other, as you know, in their manners, circumstances and prejudices, should unite in forming a system of national government so little liable to well-founded objections. Nor am I such an enthusiastic, partial, or indiscriminating admirer of it, as not to perceive it is tinged with some real, though not radical defects. With regard to the two great points, the pivots upon which the whole machine must move, my creed is simply, First, that the general government is not invested

with more powers than are indispensably necessary to perform the functions of a good government; and consequently, that no objection ought to be made against the quantity of power delegated to it.

"Secondly that these powers, as the appointment of all rulers will forever arise from, and at short stated intervals recur to, the free suffrages of the people, are so distributed among the legislative, executive, and judicial branches into which the general government is arranged, that it can never be in danger of degenerating into a monarchy, an oligarchy, an aristocracy, or any other despotic or oppressive form, so long as there shall remain any virtue in the body of the people.

"It will at least be a recommendation to the proposed Constitution, that it is provided with more checks and barriers against the introduction of tyranny, and those of a nature less liable to be surmounted, than any government hitherto instituted among mortals.

"We are not to expect perfection in this world; but mankind, in modern times, have apparently made some progress in the science of government. Should that which is now offered to the people of America be found on experiment less perfect than it can be made, a constitutional door is left open for its amelioration."

George Washington, John Habberton, p. 270.

"The Best That Could Be Obtained"

(Letter to Patrick Henry).

"MOUNT VERNON, 24 SEPTEMBER, 1787.

"*Dear Sir,*

"In the first moment after my return, I take the liberty of sending you a copy of the Constitution, which the federal convention has submitted to the people of these States. I accompany it with no observations. Your own judgment will at once discover the good and exceptionable parts of it;

and your experience of the difficulties, which have ever arisen when attempts have been made to reconcile such variety of interests and local prejudices, as pervade the several States, will render explanation unnecessary. I wish the Constitution, which is offered, had been more perfect; but I sincerely believe that it is the best that could be obtained at this time. And, as a constitutional door is opened for amendment hereafter, the adoption of it, under the present circumstances of the Union, is in my opinion desirable.

“From a variety of concurring accounts it appears to me that the political concerns of this country are in a manner suspended by a thread, and that the convention has been looked up to, by the reflecting part of the community, with a solicitude which is hardly to be conceived; and, if nothing had been agreed on by that body, anarchy would soon have ensued, the seeds being deeply sown in every soil. I am,” &c.,

[G. WASHINGTON.]

Writings of Washington, Edited by Lawrence B. Evans, Ph.D., p. 281.

Thirteen a Magic Number in History

In that nobler sense of the word, a colony which is not independent has not risen to the full rank of a colony; it is hardly a home for the new folk of the motherland; it is little more than an outpost of its dominion. Surely the Englishmen of those Thirteen lands, who had unhappily to fight their way to the full rights of Englishmen, did not cease to be Englishmen, to be colonists of England, because they won them. Surely they became in a higher and truer sense colonies of the English folk because they had ceased to be dependencies of the British crown.

I speak of Thirteen lands; and Thirteen is as it were a magic number in the history of federations. It is a memorable number alike in the League of Achaia and in the Old League of High Germany. But in none of the three was Thirteen to be the fated stint and bound among the sharers

in the common freedom. Thirteen stars, Thirteen stripes, were wrought on the banner of the United States of America in their first day of independence, the day of their second birth as truly and fully a second English nation. Look at that banner now; tell the number of those stars and call them by their names, each of them the name of a free commonwealth of the English folk. See we not there the expansion of England in its greatest form? See we not there the work of Hengest and Cerdic carried out on a scale on which it could never have been carried out in the island which they won for us? The dependent provinces of England stretched but in name to the banks of the Father of Waters; from the border ridge of Alleghany, as from the height of Pisgah, they did but take a glance at the wider land beyond. The independent colonies of England have found those bounds too strait for them. They have gone on and taken possession; they have carried the common speech and the common law, beyond the mountains, beyond the rivers, beyond the vaster mountains, beyond the Eastern Ocean itself, till America marches upon Asia. Such has been the might of independence; such has been the strength of a folk which drew a new life from the axe which did not hew it down, but by a health-giving stroke parted it asunder. It may be, it is only in human nature that so it should be, that the fact that independence was won by the sword drew forth a keener life, a more conscious energy, a firmer and fiercer purpose to grow and to march on. The growth of a land free from the beginning might perchance have been slower; let it be so; a slight check on the forward march would not have been dearly purchased by unbroken friendship between parent and child from the beginning.

George Washington, the Expander of England, Edward A. Freeman, D.C.L., LL.D.,
p. 95.

CHAPTER XXXI

LAUNCHING THE SHIP OF STATE

First President Unanimously Elected on the First Ballot

Once more he was called to listen to the highest demands of his country in his unanimous election to the presidency. With what emotions, with what humble resignation, with how little fluttering of vainglory let the modest entry in his diary, of the 16th of April, 1789, tell:

"About ten o'clock," he writes, "I bade adieu to Mount Vernon, to private life, and to domestic felicity; and with a mind oppressed with more anxious and painful sensations than I have words to express, set out for New York with the best disposition to render service to my country in obedience to its call, but with less hope of answering its expectations."

George Washington, Evart A. Duyckinck, Portrait Gallery of Eminent Men and Women, Vol. I, p. 137.

President-elect Washington's Farewell to His Mother

Immediately after the organization of the present government, the chief magistrate repaired to Fredericksburg, to pay his humble duty to his mother, preparatory to his departure for New York. An affecting scene ensued. The son feelingly remarked the ravages which a torturing disease had made upon the aged frame of the mother, and addressed her with these words: "The people, madam, have been pleased, with the most flattering unanimity to elect me to the chief magistracy of these United States, but before I can assume the functions of my office, I have come to bid you an affectionate farewell. So soon as the weight of public business, which must necessarily attend the outset

of a new government, can be disposed of, I shall hasten to Virginia, and"—here the matron interrupted with—"And you will see me no more; my great age, and the disease which is fast approaching my vitals, warn me that I shall not be long in this world; I trust in God that I may be somewhat prepared for a better. But go, George, fulfil the high destinies which Heaven appears to have intended for you; go, my son, and may Heaven's and a mother's blessing be with you always."

The President was deeply affected. His head rested upon the shoulder of his parent, whose aged arm feebly yet fondly encircled his neck. That brow on which fame had wreathed the purest laurel virtue ever gave to created man, relaxed from its awful bearing. That look which could have awed a Roman senate in its Fabrician day, was bent in filial tenderness upon the time-worn features of the aged matron. He wept.

Recollections of Washington, by His Adopted Son, George Washington Parke Custis.
P. 144.

The First President-elect on His Way to New York

Washington was elected President on the first ballot; there was no need for any one to move that the ballot be made unanimous, for not a single vote was cast against him. On receipt of formal notification from Congress, he started for the seat of government, which was then at New York, and from the beginning of his journey to its end he found that the entire community had business that called them to the roadside. Again he crossed the Delaware, not, as before, at night, by stealth and in desperation. There was, as before, a storm, but it was of deafening applause instead of blinding snow, and those who followed him, as did a messenger from Congress on that eventful Christmas night in 1776, found their way not marked by the bloody footprints of patriot soldiers, but by flowers cast in the road by patriots' children.

Before reaching New York, Washington had taken as much reception as he could enjoy, so he wrote Governor Clinton that he would be glad to enter the city without ceremony, which showed that he did not understand the people of New York. At Elizabeth Point, in the Kills, he was placed in a handsome barge manned by thirteen American ship captains (for there were American ships, and consequently ship captains, in those days), and rowed to the Battery through a long avenue of boats of all kinds and all full of vociferous patriots. Enough people were on shore, however, to fill the streets and windows and give him the heartiest reception that the city ever extended to any one, for at last, after many years, Washington had captured New York.

George Washington, John Habberton, p. 273.

Song of the Girls Strewing His Path with Flowers

Welcome, mighty chief, once more
Welcome to this grateful shore;
Now no mercenary foe
Aims again the fatal blow—
Aims at thee the fatal blow.
Virgins fair and matrons grave,
These thy conquering arm did save.
Build for thee triumphal bowers,
Strew, ye fair, his way with flowers—
Strew your Hero's way with flowers.

Written for the occasion by Richard Howell, Governor of New Jersey, and sung at the bridge at Trenton, 1789.

Ovation at New York

He approached the landing-place of Murray's Wharf amid the ringing of bells, the roaring of cannonry, and the shouting of multitudes collected on every pier-head. On landing, he was received by Governor Clinton. General Knox, too, who had taken such affectionate leave of him on

his retirement from military life, was there to welcome him in his civil capacity. Other of his fellow-soldiers of the Revolution were likewise there, mingled with the civic dignitaries. At this juncture an officer stepped up and requested Washington's orders, announcing himself as commanding his guard. Washington directed him to proceed according to the directions he might have received in the present arrangements, but that for the future the love of his fellow-citizens was all the guard he wanted.

Carpets had been spread to a carriage prepared to convey him to his destined residence, but he preferred to walk. He was attended by a long civil and military train. In the streets through which he passed the houses were decorated with flags, silken banners, garlands of flowers and evergreens, and bore his name in every form of ornament. The streets were crowded with people, so that it was with difficulty a passage could be made by the city officers. Washington frequently bowed to the multitude as he passed, taking off his hat to the ladies, who thronged every window, waving their handkerchiefs, throwing flowers before him, and many of them shedding tears of enthusiasm.

That day he dined with his old friend Governor Clinton, who had invited a numerous company of public functionaries and foreign diplomatists to meet him, and in the evening the city was brilliantly illuminated.

Life of George Washington, Washington Irving, Vol. IV, p. 578.

Why the Inauguration Was Delayed

The inauguration was delayed several days by a question which had risen as to the form or title by which the President-elect was to be addressed; and this had been deliberated in a committee of both Houses. The question had been mooted without Washington's privity, and contrary to his desire; as he feared that any title might awaken

the sensitive jealousy of republicans, at a moment when it was all-important to conciliate public good-will to the new form of government. It was a relief to him, therefore, when it was finally resolved that the address should be simply "the President of the United States," without any addition of title; a judicious form which has remained to the present day.

Life of George Washington, Washington Irving, Vol. IV, p. 580.

A National Tribute of Affection

For a week Washington remained quietly in New York, where great preparations were being made for installing him as President. On Wall Street a fine building, known as Federal Hall, had been erected and presented to Congress, and here the inauguration was to take place. Those who feared that American liberty would be endangered by the observance of any forms whatsoever, were exceedingly critical of the arrangements made for the occasion, but it was, after all, a very simple ceremony that marked the inauguration of the first President of the United States.

Early in the morning of April 30, 1789, the bells of all the churches summoned the people to their various places of worship for the special services ordained for the day, and by the time these were concluded the military and civil procession was already moving toward the Franklin House, and Wall Street and its vicinity were crowded with a dense mass of spectators. Washington left his residence shortly after twelve o'clock, but so great was the throng in the streets that his carriage did not reach Federal Hall for almost an hour, and he was obliged to alight some little distance from the building and make his way to it on foot, passing through the cheering crowd between a double line of troopers. A moment's pause followed, and then he appeared on the balcony facing Wall and Broad streets, and behind him came John Adams, Chancellor Livingston,



WASHINGTON TAKING THE FIRST OATH AS PRESIDENT

Baron Steuben, General Knox, and other distinguished officers and officials. He was dressed in a plain brown-cloth suit, with metal buttons ornamented with eagles; his stockings were white silk and his shoe buckles silver; and at his side he carried a steel-hilted dress sword, and his powdered hair was worn in a queue.

Never did any man receive a more general and heartfelt welcome than that which greeted Washington as he faced the mass of spectators, but he was evidently unprepared for the wild outburst with which he was acclaimed. It was at once a roar of triumphant thanksgiving, a national salute, and a tribute of admiration and affection, and visibly affected by it, he stepped back for a moment to recover his composure.

On the Trail of Washington, Frederick Trevor Hill, p. 256.

"Long Live President Washington!"

Nearly eight years after the Revolution . . . Washington was elected the first President of the United States. He took the oath of office, April 30, 1789, on the balcony of a building in front of City Hall, which they afterwards called Federal Hall, on the corner of Wall and Nassau streets, New York City, where the United States Sub-Treasury now stands. It had been intended that the inauguration should take place March 4th, when the Constitution went into effect, but for several reasons the ceremony was postponed. When Washington took the oath as President the Judge who administered it raised his hand and cried to the crowd below: "Long live George Washington, President of the United States." Then a flag was run up above the cupola of the building, bells rang, cannon boomed, and all the people shouted:

"Long live George Washington, President of the United States!"

The Story of the White House, Wayne Whipple, p. 13.

Part of the First Inaugural Address

“Fellow-Citizens of the Senate and of the House of Representatives:

“Among the vicissitudes incident to life, no event could have filled me with greater anxieties, than that of which the notification was transmitted by your order, and received on the 14th day of the present month. On the one hand I was summoned by my country, whose voice I can never hear but with veneration and love, from a retreat which I had chosen with the fondest predilection, and, in my flattering hopes, with an immutable decision, as the asylum of my declining years; a retreat which was rendered every day more necessary, as well as more dear to me, by the addition of habit to inclination, and of frequent interruptions in my health to the gradual waste committed on it by time. On the other hand, the magnitude and difficulty of the trust, to which the voice of my country called me, being sufficient to awaken in the wisest and most experienced of her citizens a distrustful scrutiny into his qualifications, could not but overwhelm with despondence one, who, inheriting inferior endowments from nature, and unpractised in the duties of civil administration, ought to be peculiarly conscious of his own deficiencies. In this conflict of emotions, all I dare aver is, that it has been my faithful study to collect my duty from a just appreciation of every circumstance by which it might be affected. All I dare hope is, that, if in executing this task, I have been too much swayed by a grateful remembrance of former instances, or by an affectionate sensibility to this transcendent proof of the confidence of my fellow-citizens; and have thence too little consulted my incapacity as well as disinclination for the weighty and untried cares before me; my error will be palliated by the motives which misled me, and its consequences be judged by my country with some share of the partiality in which they originated. . . .

“Having thus imparted to you my sentiments, as they have been awakened by the occasion which brings us together, I shall take my present leave, but not without resorting once more to the benign Parent of the human race, in humble supplication, that, since He has been pleased to favor the American people with opportunities for deliberating in perfect tranquillity, and dispositions for deciding with unparalleled unanimity on the form of government for the security of their union and the advancement of their happiness; so His divine blessing may be equally *conspicuous* in the enlarged views, the temperate consultations, and the wise measures, on which the success of this government must depend.”

Washington's First Inaugural Address, Old South Leaflets, Fifth Series, 1887, No. 8, p. 1.

Guide the “Ship of State” Aright

O noble brow, so wise in thought!
O heart, so true! O soul unbought!
O eye, so keen to pierce the night
And guide the “Ship of State” aright!
O life, so simple, grand and free,
The humblest still may turn to thee.
O king uncrowned! O prince of men!
When shall we see thy like again?
The century, just passed away,
Has felt the impress of thy sway,
While youthful hearts have stronger grown
And made thy patriot zeal their own.
In marble hall or lowly cot
Thy name hath never been forgot.
The world itself is richer, far,
For the clear shining of a star.
And loyal hearts in years to run
Shall turn to thee, O Washington!

*Washington, Mary Wingate, Washington's Birthday, Edited by Robert Haven Schauf-
fler, p. 57.*

Starting the New Government

On assuming the responsibilities of the new office, Washington found himself in about the same position as when, nearly fifteen years before, he took command of the army, for everything was to be done and there was nothing with which to do it. He had no Cabinet, for although the convention had provided for "constitutional advisers," the States and cliques had not yet learned the trick of getting rid of troublesome politicians by inflicting them upon the President. There was a treasury, but no money to put into it, although there was an indebtedness of fifty million dollars, for which money the creditors had been clamoring for a long time. There were Indian troubles at the west, discontent among the settlers in the Mississippi Valley, and British soldiers trying to act as bailiffs, at some posts in the (then) northwest. And, to crown all, there was a general willingness, among State officials, to stand off as far as possible and see if the new government could stand alone.

Fortunately, the old departments of the confederation contained some men on whom Washington had learned to rely; one was John Jay, soon afterward appointed Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, and another was General Knox, who remained in his old position by being appointed Secretary of War. Hamilton was quickly made Secretary of the Treasury. Edmund Randolph of Virginia became Attorney General, and Jefferson was invited to return from France and become Secretary of State.

As no two members of the Cabinet were entirely agreed as to the powers of the government and the probable drift of the nation, not even the smallest question could be settled without a great deal of talk. One of the first subjects of general wonder was that of etiquette, and no two men, in the Cabinet or out of it, agreed about it. Washington's sole personal concern in the matter was to be approachable, yet have some time to himself for private and public purposes; since his inauguration the throngs that dropped

in to see the President had been so great that the unfortunate man had scarcely time for eating and sleeping.

Washington finally asked the advice of his friends on this perplexing subject; the replies were various, but the one that savored most of European court customs came not from descendants of Virginia cavaliers or New York aristocrats; it was given by John Adams of Massachusetts. A form of etiquette was finally patched together, as simple and republican as any one could have made it. There were receptions every week at the Executive Mansion, which any respectable citizen could attend without special invitation, yet so refined and graceful were the natural manners of the President and his wife; and so stiff was Washington's carriage, thanks to rheumatic limbs and other infirmities incident to approaching age, that suspicious people began to talk of levees, drawing-rooms, courtly style, etc.

For many weeks Washington was saved from outside annoyances by an attack of sickness that sent him almost to his grave. He had not yet recovered when his mother died, so he had neither time nor inclination to care at all for forms and ceremonies.

George Washington, John Habberton, p. 276.

Mrs. Washington's "Queenly Drawing-rooms!"

On the 17th of May, Mrs. Washington, accompanied by her grandchildren, Eleanor Custis and George Washington Parke Custis, set out from Mount Vernon in her travelling carriage with a small escort of horse, to join her husband at the seat of government; as she had been accustomed to join him at headquarters, in the intervals of his Revolutionary campaigns.

Throughout the journey she was greeted with public testimonials of respect and affection. As she approached Philadelphia, the President of Pennsylvania and other State functionaries, with a number of the principal inhabitants of both sexes, came forth to meet her, and she was attended into the city by a numerous cavalcade, and welcomed with the ringing of bells and firing of cannon.

Similar honors were paid her in her progress through New Jersey. At Elizabethtown she alighted at the residence of Governor Livingston, whither Washington came from New York to meet her. They proceeded thence by water, in the same splendid barge in which the General had been conveyed for his inauguration. It was manned as on that occasion, by thirteen master pilots, arrayed in white, and had several persons of note on board. There was a salute of thirteen guns as the barge passed the Battery at New York. The landing took place at Peck Slip, not far from the presidential residence, amid the enthusiastic cheers of an immense multitude.

On the following day, Washington gave a demi-official dinner, of which Mr. Wingate, a senator from New Hampshire, who was present, writes as follows:

"The guests consisted of the Vice-President, the foreign ministers, the heads of departments, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the Senators from New Hampshire and Georgia, the then most Northern and Southern States. It was the least showy dinner that I ever saw at the President's table, and the company was not large. As there was no chaplain present, the President himself said a very short grace as he was sitting down. After dinner and dessert were finished, *one glass* of wine was passed around the table, and *no toast*. The President rose, and all the company retired to the drawing-room, from which the guests departed, as every one chose, without ceremony."

On the evening of the following day (Friday, May 29th), Mrs. Washington had a general reception, which was attended by all that was distinguished in official and fashionable society. Henceforward there were similar receptions every Friday evening, from eight to ten o'clock, to which the families of all persons of respectability, native or foreign, had access, without special invitation; and at which the President was always present. These assemblages were as free from ostentation and restraint as the ordinary recep-

tions of polite society; yet the reader will find they were soon subject to invidious misrepresentation; and caviled at as "court-like-levees" and "queenly drawing-rooms!"

Life of George Washington, Washington Irving, Vol. V, p. 39.

Supreme Court and Congress

By the judicial system established for the federal government, the Supreme Court of the United States was to be composed of a chief justice and five associate judges. There were to be district courts with a judge in each State, and circuit courts held by an associate judge and a district judge. John Jay, of New York, received the appointment of Chief Justice, and in a letter enclosing his commission, Washington expressed the singular pleasure he felt in addressing him "as the head of that department which must be considered as the keystone of our political fabric."

Jay's associate judges were, John Rutledge of South Carolina, James Wilson of Pennsylvania, William Cushing of Massachusetts, John Blair of Virginia, and James Iredell of North Carolina. Washington had originally nominated to one of the judgeships his former military secretary, Robert Harrison, familiarly known as *the old Secretary*; but he preferred the office of Chancellor of Maryland, recently conferred upon him.

On the 29th of September, Congress adjourned to the first Monday in January, after an arduous session, in which many important questions had been discussed, and powers organized and distributed. The actual Congress was inferior in eloquence and shining talent to the first Congress of the Revolution; but it possessed men well fitted for the momentous work before them; sober, solid, upright, and well informed. An admirable harmony had prevailed between the legislature and the executive, and the utmost decorum had reigned over the public deliberations.

Fisher Ames, then a young man, who had acquired a brilliant reputation in Massachusetts by the eloquence

with which he had championed the new constitution in the convention of that important State, and who had recently been elected to Congress, speaks of it in the following terms:

"I have never seen an assembly where so little art was used. If they wish to carry a point, it is directly declared and justified. Its merits and defects are plainly stated, not without sophistry and prejudice, but without management. . . . There is no intrigue, no caucusing, little of clanning together, little asperity in debate, or personal bitterness out of the House."

Life of George Washington, Washington Irving, Vol. V, p. 53.

"The First and Dearest Wish of My Heart"

As to Mrs. Washington, those who really knew her at the time, speak of her as free from pretension or affectation; undazzled by her position, and discharging its duties with the truthful simplicity and real good-breeding of one accustomed to preside over a hospitable mansion in the "Ancient Dominion." She had her husband's predilection for private life. In a letter to an intimate she writes: "It is owing to the kindness of our numerous friends in all quarters that my new and unwished for situation is not indeed a burden to me. When I was much younger, I should probably have enjoyed the innocent gayeties of life as much as most persons of my age; but I had long since placed all the prospects of my future worldly happiness in the still enjoyments of the fireside at Mount Vernon.

"I little thought, when the war was finished, that any circumstances could possibly happen, which would call the General into public life again. I had anticipated from that moment we should be suffered to grow old together in solitude and tranquillity. That was the first and dearest wish of my heart."

Life of George Washington Washington Irving, Vol. V, p. 42.

"The General Always Retires at Nine"

To protect himself from being at everybody's call, and so unable to be of the greatest service, he established certain

rules. Every Tuesday, between the hours of three and four, he received whoever might come. Every Friday afternoon Mrs. Washington received with him. At all other times, he could be seen only by special appointment. He never accepted invitations to dinner, and that has been the rule of Presidents ever since; but he invited constantly to his own table foreign ministers, members of the government, and other guests. He received no visits on Sunday. He went to church with his family in the morning, and spent the afternoon by himself. The evening he spent with his family and sometimes had with him an intimate friend.

He still kept up his old habit of rising at four and going to bed at nine. Mrs. Washington had a grave little formula with which she used to dismiss visitors in the evening:

"The General always retires at nine o'clock, and I usually precede him."

George Washington, an Historical Biography, Horace E. Scudder, p. 232.

Why Was Jefferson Secretary of State?

Washington's extreme desire to have Jefferson act as Secretary of State has never been distinctly explained; it is not unlikely that it was because the ex-governor of Virginia and author of the Declaration of Independence was what in modern parlance would be called a "red hot republican," and his presence in the Cabinet would do much to allay the suspicion, often uttered, that the tendency of the new government would be monarchical. Washington himself was known to be a believer in strong governments; so was Jay; Hamilton, although not wishing a monarchy in America, was an ardent admirer of the English system; and Knox, being a soldier, might be supposed willing to use the army in favor of the ruler and against the people in case of emergency, as soldiers in foreign cabinets had always been ready to do. But to Jefferson the people were everything, and rulers nothing; "there is not a crowned head in Europe," he said, "whose talents or merits would entitle him to be

elected a vestryman by the people of any parish in America." He was jealous, for his country's sake, of nearly everything and everybody in the government but Washington himself, for whom he had so great respect that, although he opposed the re-election of any man to the presidency, he said of the principle, "I would not wish it to be altered during the lifetime of our great leader, whose executive talents are superior to those, I believe, of any man in the world, and who alone, by the authority of his name and the confidence reposed in his perfect integrity, is fully qualified to put the new government so under way as to secure it against the efforts of opposition."

Jefferson's hatred of monarchical institutions had been further evinced by the hearty sympathy he was known to have with all the Frenchmen who were preparing for the revolution. While minister from the United States to the King of France, he consorted by choice with the most radical of the radicals, and wrote enthusiastic letters about them to his American acquaintances. How could any government be suspected of monarchical tendencies, if such a man stood next in importance to the executive?

George Washington, John Habberton, p. 278.

Hamilton versus Jefferson

Hamilton, Secretary of the Treasury, had been ordered by Congress, at its previous session, to prepare a plan of payment; he accordingly advised that the State liabilities should be assumed by the nation, and the entire debt be funded, Congress to impose taxes for its reduction and final payment. Washington heartily approved Hamilton's plan, but nearly half—and the noisiest half—of Congress opposed it. They were willing to pay the money due to foreigners, otherwise they might have to fight again; the home debt, much of which had passed into the hands of speculators, they wanted to "scale" according to the holders, and they objected stoutly to the assumption of the war debts of the

States. This last measure was defeated in the House, by a majority of two, which afterward was overcome by a little dicker whereby Jefferson secured two Virginia votes for the assumption of the State debts—a northern measure—on Hamilton's obtaining a majority in favor of the plan of the ultimate removal of the seat of government to the south. Both men meant well, but unfortunately Jefferson, who knew nothing whatever of finance, and, being human, distrusted whatever he did not understand, was persuaded that Hamilton had tricked him, and from that time forth he suspected the Secretary, politically, of every thing that was bad—even of secret designs to turn the government into a monarchy.

The subsequent disagreements of the two men were an unfailling source of misery to Washington, and he devoted many precious hours to the task of showing Jefferson his mistake, but all was of no avail. When the Secretary of State was not complaining of the Secretary of the Treasury, he was begging Washington to abate form and ceremony. He was not alone at this business, although he cannot be excused on account of ignorance, as could Patrick Henry, who actually declined to be elected to the Senate because he felt too old to adopt the manner which he had been informed prevailed at the seat of government. Another Virginian, one Colonel B——, had reported that there was more pomp than at the British court, and that Washington's bows were more distant and stiff.

When this came to Washington's ears, he seized his pen and wrote: "That I have not been able to make bows to the taste of Colonel B—— (who by the way, I believe never saw one of them) is to be regretted, especially as upon those occasions they were indiscriminately bestowed and the best I was master of. Would it not have been better to throw a veil of charity over them, ascribing the stiffness to the effects of age or the unskillfulness of my teacher, rather than to pride and the dignity of office, which God knows has no charms for me? For I can truly say I had rather be at

Mount Vernon, with a friend or two about me, than to be attended at the seat of government by the officers of state and the representatives of every power in Europe."

George Washington, John Habberton, p. 280.

A Very Sensible Rule

From the first, he began to be besieged by applicants for office, and he made immediately the very sensible rule that he would not give any pledge or encouragement to any applicant. He heard what they and their friends had to say, and then made up his mind deliberately. He had, however, certain principles in his mind which governed him in making appointments, and they were so high and honorable, and show so well the character of the man, that I copy here what he said with regard to the matter:—

"Scarcely a day passes in which applications of one kind or another do not arrive; insomuch that, had I not early adopted some general principles, I should before this time have been wholly occupied in this business. As it is, I have found the number of answers, which I have been necessitated to give in my own hand, an almost insupportable burden to me. The points in which all these answers have agreed in substance are, that, should it be my lot to go again into public office, I would go without being under any possible engagements of any nature whatsoever; that, so far as I knew my own heart, I would not be in the remotest degree influenced in making nominations by motives arising from the ties of family or blood; and that, on the other hand, three things, in my opinion, ought principally to be regarded, namely: the fitness of characters to fill the offices, the comparative claims from the former merits and sufferings in service of the different candidates, and the distribution of appointments in as equal a proportion as might be to persons belonging to the different States in the Union. Without precautions of this kind, I clearly foresaw the endless jealousies and possibly the fatal consequences to which

a government, depending altogether on the good-will of the people for its establishment, would certainly be exposed in its early stages. Besides, I thought, whatever the effect might be in pleasing or displeasing any individuals at the present moment, a due concern for my own reputation, not less decisively than a sacred regard to the interests of the community, required that I should hold myself absolutely at liberty to act, while in office, with a sole reference to justice and the public good."

George Washington, an Historical Biography, Horace E. Scudder, p. 231.

The Country's Credit

Among the most important objects suggested in the address for the deliberation of Congress, were provisions for the national defense; provisions for facilitating intercourse with foreign nations, and defraying the expenses of diplomatic agents; laws for the naturalization of foreigners; uniformity in the currency, weights, and measures of the United States; facilities for the advancement of commerce, agriculture, and manufactures; attention to the post-office and post-roads; measures for the promotion of science and literature, and for the support of public credit.

The last object was the one which Washington had more immediately at heart. The government was now organized, apparently, to the satisfaction of all parties; but its efficiency would essentially depend on the success of a measure which Washington had pledged himself to institute, and which was yet to be tried; namely, a system of finance adapted to revive the national credit, and place the public debt in a condition to be paid off. The credit of the country was at a low ebb. The confederacy, by its articles, had the power of contracting debts for a national object, but no control over the means of payment. Thirteen independent legislatures could grant or withhold the means. The government was then a government under governments—the States had more power than Congress. At the close of

the war the debt amounted to forty-two millions of dollars; but so little had the country been able to fulfil its engagements, owing to the want of a sovereign legislature having the sole and executive power of laying duties upon imports, and thus providing adequate resources, that the debt had swollen, through arrears of interest, to upwards of fifty-four millions. Of this amount nearly eight millions were due to France, between three and four millions to private lenders in Holland, and about two hundred and fifty thousand in Spain; making, altogether, nearly twelve millions due abroad. The debt contracted at home amounted to upwards of forty-two millions, and was due, originally, to officers and soldiers of the Revolutionary War, who had risked their lives for the cause; farmers who had furnished supplies for the public service, or whose property had been assumed for it; capitalists who, in critical periods of the war, had ventured their fortunes in support of their country's independence. The domestic debt, therefore, could not have had a more sacred and patriotic origin; but, in the long delay of national justice, the paper which represented these outstanding claims, had sunk to less than a sixth of its nominal value, and the larger portion of it had been parted with at that depreciated rate, either in the course of trade, or to speculative purchasers, who were willing to take the risk of eventual payment, however little their confidence seemed to be warranted, at the time, by the pecuniary condition and prospects of the country.

The debt, when thus transferred, lost its commanding appeal to patriotic sympathy; but remained as obligatory in the eye of justice. In public newspapers, however, and in private circles, the propriety of a discrimination between the assignees and the original holders of the public securities, was freely discussed. Beside the foreign and domestic debt of the federal government, the States, individually, were involved in liabilities contracted for the common cause, to an aggregate amount of about twenty-five millions of

dollars; of which, more than one-half was due from three of them; Massachusetts and South Carolina each owing more than five millions, and Virginia more than three and a half. The reputation and well-being of the government were, therefore, at stake upon the issue of some plan to retrieve the national credit, and establish it upon a firm and secure foundation.

Life of George Washington, Washington Irving, Vol. V, p. 82.

A Virulent Attack of Anthrax

As soon as Washington could command sufficient leisure to inspect papers and documents he called unofficially upon the heads of departments to furnish him with such reports in writing as would aid him in gaining a distinct idea of the state of public affairs. For this purpose also he had recourse to the public archives, and proceeded to make notes of the foreign official correspondence from the close of the war until his inauguration. He was interrupted in his task by a virulent attack of anthrax, which for several days threatened mortification. The knowledge of his perilous condition spread alarm through the community; he, however, remained unagitated. His medical adviser was Dr. Samuel Bard, of New York, an excellent physician and most estimable man, who attended him with unremitting assiduity. Being alone one day with the doctor, Washington regarded him steadily, and asked his candid opinions as the probable result of the case. "Do not flatter me with vain hopes," said he, with placid firmness; "I am not afraid to die, and therefore can bear the worst." The doctor expressed hope, but owned that he had apprehensions. "Whether to-night or twenty years hence, makes no difference," observed Washington. "I know that I am in the hands of a good Providence." His sufferings were intense, and his recovery was slow. For six weeks he was obliged to lie on his right side; but after a time he had his carriage

so contrived that he could extend himself at full length in it, and take exercise in the open air.

While rendered morbidly sensitive by bodily pains, he suffered deep annoyance from having one of his earliest nominations, that of Benjamin Fishburn, for the place of naval officer of the port of Savannah, rejected by the Senate.

If there was anything in which Washington was scrupulously conscientious, it was in the exercise of the nominating power; scrutinizing the fitness of the candidates; their comparative claims on account of public services and sacrifices, and with regard to the equable distribution of offices among the States; in all which he governed himself solely by considerations for the public good. He was especially scrupulous where his own friends and connections were concerned. "So far as I know my own mind," would he say, "I would not be in the remotest degree influenced in making nominations by motives arising from the ties of family or blood."

Life of George Washington, Washington Irving, Vol. V, p. 46.

"You See How Well He Bears It"

"It was while residing in Cherry street that the President was attacked by a severe illness, that required a surgical operation. He was attended by the elder and younger Doctors Bard. The elder being somewhat doubtful of his nerves, gave the knife to his son, bidding him cut away—deeper, deeper still; don't be afraid; you see how well he bears it.' Great anxiety was felt in New York, at this time, as the President's case was considered extremely dangerous. Happily, the operation proved successful, and the patient's recovery removed all cause of alarm. During the illness a chain was stretched across the street, and the sidewalks were lined with straw. Soon after his recovery, the President set out on his intended tour through the New England States."

Quoted in *The Pictorial Life of General Washington*, by J. Frost, LL.D., p. 509.

Death of Washington's Mother

While yet in a state of convalescence, Washington received intelligence of the death of his mother. The event, which took place at Fredericksburg in Virginia, on the 25th of August, was not unexpected; she was eighty-two years of age, and had for some time been sinking under an incurable malady, so that when he last parted with her he had apprehended that it was a final separation. Still he was deeply affected by the intelligence; consoling himself, however, with the reflection that "Heaven had spared her to an age beyond which few attain; had favored her with the full enjoyment of her mental faculties, and as much bodily health as usually falls to the lot of fourscore."

Mrs. Mary Washington is represented as a woman of strong plain sense, strict integrity, and an inflexible spirit of command. We have mentioned the exemplary manner in which she, a lone widow, had trained her little flock in their childhood. The deference for her, then instilled in their minds, continued throughout life, and was manifested by Washington when at the height of his power and reputation. Eminently practical, she had thwarted his military aspirations when he was about to seek honor in the British navy. During his early and disastrous campaigns on the frontier she would often shake her head and exclaim, "Ah, George had better have staid at home and cultivated his farm." Even his ultimate success and renown had never dazzled, however much they may have gratified her. When others congratulated her, and were enthusiastic in his praise, she listened in silence, and would temperately reply that he had been a good son, and she believed he had done his duty as a man.

CHAPTER XXXII

VISITING THE STATES

Boston Authorities Quarrel over Receiving the President

At the time of writing the letter to Jefferson, offering him the department of State, Washington was on the eve of a journey through the Eastern States, with a view, as he said, to observe the situation of the country, and with a hope of perfectly reëstablishing his health, which a series of indispositions had much impaired. Having made all his arrangements, and left the papers appertaining to the office of Foreign Affairs under the temporary superintendence of Mr. Jay, he set out from New York on the 15th of October, traveling in his carriage with four horses, and accompanied by his official secretary, Major Jackson, and his private secretary, Mr. Lear. Though averse from public parade, he could not but be deeply affected and gratified at every step by the manifestation of a people's love. Wherever he came, all labor was suspended; business neglected. The bells were rung, the guns were fired; there were civic processions and military parades and triumphal arches, and all classes poured forth to testify, in every possible manner, their gratitude and affection for the man whom they hailed as the Father of his Country; and well did his noble stature, his dignified demeanor, his matured years, and his benevolent aspect, suit that venerable appellation.

On the 22nd, just after entering Massachusetts, he was met by an express from the governor of the State (the Hon. John Hancock), inviting him to make his quarters at his house while he should remain in Boston, and announcing to him that he had issued orders for proper escorts to attend him, and that the troops with the gentlemen of the

council would receive him at Cambridge and wait on him to town.

Washington, in a courteous reply, declined the Governor's invitation to his residence, having resolved, he said, on leaving New York, to accept no invitations of the kind while on his journey, through an unwillingness to give trouble to private families.

Governor Hancock was now about fifty-two years of age, tall and thin, of a commanding deportment and graceful manner, though stooping a little, and much afflicted with the gout. He was really hospitable, which his ample wealth enabled him to be, and was no doubt desirous of having Washington as a guest under his roof, but resolved at all events, to give him a signal reception as the guest of the State over which he presided. Now it so happened that the "select men," or municipal authorities of Boston, had also made arrangements for receiving the President in their civic domain, and in doing so had proceeded without consulting the governor; as might have been expected, some clashing of rival plans was the result.

Here ensued a great question of etiquette. The executive council insisted on the right of the governor, as chief of state, to receive and welcome its guest, at the entrance of its capital. "He should have met him at the boundary of the State over which he presides," replied the others; "and there have welcomed him to the hospitalities of the commonwealth. When the President is about to enter the town, it is the delegated right of the *municipal* authorities thereof to receive and bid him welcome."

The contending parties were drawn up resolutely in their carriages, while *aides-de-camp* and marshals were posting to and fro between them, carrying on a kind of diplomatic parley.

In the meantime the President, and Major Jackson, his secretary, had mounted on horseback, and were waiting on the Neck to be conducted into the town. The day was unusually cold and murky. Washington became chilled

and impatient, and when informed of the cause of the detention, "Is there no other avenue into the town?" demanded he of Major Jackson. He was, in fact, on the point of wheeling about, when word was brought that the controversy was over, and that he would be received by the municipal authorities.

We give his own account of the succeeding part of the ceremony. "At the entrance, I was welcomed by the select men in a body. Then following the lieutenant-governor and council in the order we came from Cambridge (preceded by the town corps, very handsomely dressed), we passed through the citizens, classed in their different professions, and under their own banners, till we came to the state house."

The streets, the doors, the windows, the housetops, were crowded with well-dressed people of both sexes. "He was on horseback," says an observer, "dressed in his old continental uniform, with his hat off. He did not bow to the spectators as he passed, but sat on his horse with a calm, dignified air. He dismounted at the old state house,

and came out on a temporary balcony at the west end; a long procession passed before him, whose salutations he occasionally returned. These and other ceremonials being over, the lieutenant governor and council, accompanied by the Vice-President, conducted Washington to his lodgings, where they took leave of him."

Life of George Washington, Washington Irving, Vol. V, p. 67.

Governor Hancock's Ludicrous Call on the President

And now he is doomed to the annoyance of a new question of etiquette. He had previously accepted the invitation of Governor Hancock to an informal dinner, but had expected that that functionary would wait upon him as soon as he should arrive; instead of which he received a message from him pleading that he was too much indisposed to do so. Washington distrusted the sincerity of the apology. He

had been given to understand that the governor wished to evade paying the first visit, conceiving that, as governor of a State, and within the bounds of that State, the point of etiquette made it proper that he should receive the first visit, even from the President of the United States. Washington determined to resist this pretension; he therefore excused himself from the informal dinner, and dined at his lodgings, where the Vice-President favored him with his company.

The next day the governor, on consultation with his friends, was persuaded to waive the point of etiquette, and sent "his best respects to the President," informing him that, if at home and at leisure, he would do himself the honor of visiting him in half an hour, intimating that he would have done it sooner had his health permitted, and that it was not without hazard to his health that he did it now.

The following was Washington's reply, the last sentence of which almost savors of irony:

"Sunday, 26th October, 1 o'clock.

"The President of the United States presents his best respects to the Governor, and has the honor to inform him that he shall be home till two o'clock.

"The President need not express the pleasure it will give him to see the Governor; but at the same time, he most earnestly begs that the Governor will not hazard his health on the occasion."

From Washington's diary we find that the governor found strength to pay the litigated visit within the specified time—though, according to one authority, he went enveloped in red baize and was borne, in the arms of servants, into the house.

It does not appear that any harm resulted from the hazard to which the Governor exposed himself. At all events, the hydra etiquette was silenced and everything went on pleasantly and decorously throughout the remainder of Washington's sojourn in Boston.

"I Thought You Had Been Too Long in My Family Not to Know"

When he visited Boston in 1789, he appointed eight o'clock in the morning as the hour he should set out for Salem; and while the Old South clock was striking eight, he was crossing the saddle. The company of cavalry which volunteered to escort him, not anticipating this strict punctuality, were parading in Tremont street after his departure; and it was not until the President had reached Charles River bridge where he stopped a few moments, that the troop of horse overtook him. On passing the corps, the President said, with perfect good nature,

"Major Blank, I thought you had been too long in my family not to know when it was eight o'clock."

Entertaining Anecdotes of Washington (Boston, 1833), p. 94.

Kissing and Kicking for Kissing

In Haverhill, Mass., they have a pretty tradition about Washington. When he visited that town, on his Northern tour in 1789, he stopped at a public-house. As the night was chilly, the landlady decided that his bed should be warmed, and for this purpose filled with coals her best brass warming-pan, and sent it up to his chamber in the hands of her fair young daughter. The tradition goes on to say that this modest maiden was so overcome by the sight of the great man, standing on the hearth, winding up his watch, that she hurried through her task, but in tripping from the room she unluckily, or luckily, as the event proved, stumbled and fell, and that Washington not only lifted her to her feet, but kissed her.

Well was it for the "immortal chief" that no Yankee Prince Giglio appeared on the scene, to come down on that anointed head with the warming-pan!

Now, they have in Philadelphia a tradition which strikingly contrasts with the above. When Washington was

residing in the presidential mansion on High Street, now Market, some painters were engaged in painting the upper hall, and one of them, a gay young fellow, meeting one morning, at the head of the stairs, a favorite maid of Mrs. Washington, not only barred her passage but kissed her. Taken by surprise, the damsel sent forth a scream which brought the Father of his Country in alarm from his chamber. Immediately on the offense being made known to him, he elevated his foot, which was by no means a small one, and kicked the unlucky painter downstairs.

Stories and Sketches, Grace Greenwood, p. 10.

"Hail Columbia," the President's March

"There was but one theater in New York in 1789, (in John street) and so small were its dimensions, that the whole fabric might be placed upon the stage of one of our modern theaters. Yet, humble as was the edifice, it possessed an excellent company of actors and actresses, including old Morris, who was the associate of Garrick, in the very outset of that great actor's career at Goodmans-fields. The stage boxes were appropriated to the President and Vice-President, and were each of them decorated with emblems, trophies, etc. At the foot of the play-bills were always the words '*Vivat Respublica.*' Washington often visited this theatre, being particularly gratified by Wignell's performance of *Darby*, *The Poor Soldier*.

"It was in the theater of John street, that the now national air of 'Hail Columbia,' then called the 'President's March,' was first played. It was composed by a German musician, named Fyles, the leader of the orchestra, in compliment to the President. The national air will last as long as the nation lasts, while the meritorious composer has been long since forgotten."

Quoted in the *Pictorial Life of George Washington*, by J. Frost, LL.D., p. 508.

The First Week in 1790

(From Washington's Journal.)

Friday, 1st, [January].

The Vice-President, the Governor, the Senators, Members of the House of Representatives in town, foreign public characters, and all the respectable citizens, came between the hours of 12 and 3 o'clock, to pay the compliments of the season to me—and in the afternoon a great number of gentlemen and ladies visited Mrs. Washington on the same occasion.

Saturday, 2d.

Exercised in the carriage with Mrs. Washington. Read the report of the Secretary of the Treasury respecting the state of his Department and proposed plans of finance.—Drank tea at the Chief Justice's of the U. States.

Sunday, 3d.

Went to St. Paul's Chapel.

Monday, 4th.

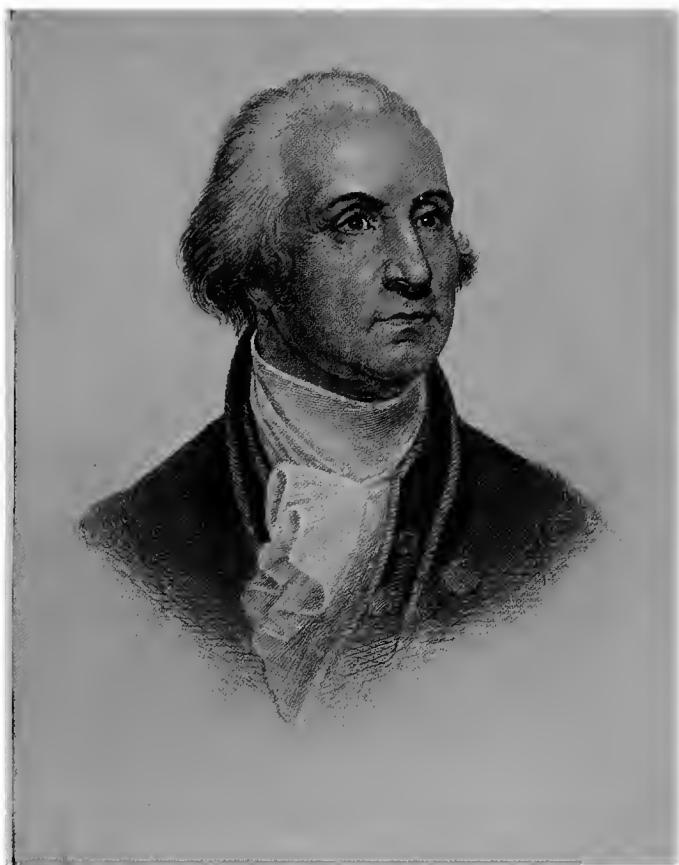
Informed the President of the Senate, and Speaker of the House of Representatives that I had some oral communications to make to Congress when each house had a quorum, and desired to be informed thereof—and of the time and place they would receive them.

Walked round the Battery in the afternoon.

Received a report from the Secretary at War respecting the state of the frontiers and Indian affairs, with other matters which I ordered to be laid before Congress, as part of the papers which will be referred to in my speech to that body.

Tuesday, 5th.

Several Members of Congress called in the forenoon to pay their respects on their arrival in town, but though a



Etched by H. B. Hall from the Painting by Rembrandt Peale.

A FAMOUS PORTRAIT OF WASHINGTON

respectable Levee, at the usual hour, three o'clock, the visitors were not numerous.

Wednesday, 6th.

Sat from half after 8 o'clock for the portrait painter, Mr. Savage, to finish the picture of me which he had begun for the University of Cambridge.

In the afternoon walked round the Battery.

Miss Anne Brown stayed here, on a visit to Mrs. Washington, to a family Dinner.

Thursday, 7th.

About one o'clock rec'd a Committee from both Houses of Congress, informing me that each had made a house, and would be ready at any time I would appoint to receive the communications I had to make in the Senate Chamber. Named to-morrow, 11 o'clock, for this purpose.

The following gentlemen dined here, viz: Messrs. Langdon, Wingate, Strong and Few, of the Senate, the Speaker, Genl. Muhlenberg and Scott, of Pennsylvania, Judge Livermore and Foster, of New Hampshire, Aimes and Thatcher and Goodhue of Massachusetts, Mr. Burke, of South Carolina, and Mr. Baldwin, of Georgia.

The Diary of George Washington, from 1789 to 1791, Edited by Benson J. Lossing, p. 65.

The President's "Speech" and a Minor "Message"

Friday, 8th. [January, 1790.]

According to appointment, at 11 o'clock, I set out for the City Hall in my coach, preceded by Colonel Humphreys and Majr. Jackson in uniform, (on my two white horses) and followed by Messer. Lear and Nelson, in my chariot, and Mr. Lewis, on horseback following them. In their rear was the Chief Justice of the United States and Secretary of the Treasury and War Departments, in their respective carriages, and in the order they are named. At the outer door of the hall I was met by the door-keepers of the Senate

and House, and conducted to the door of the Senate Chamber; and passing from thence to the Chair through the Senate on the right, and House of Representatives on the left, I took my seat. The gentlemen who attended me followed and took their stand behind the Senators; the whole rising as I entered. After being seated, at which time the members of both Houses also sat, I rose, (as they also did) and made my speech; delivering one copy to the President of the Senate, and another to the Speaker of the House of Representatives—after which, and being a few moments seated, I retired, bowing on each side to the assembly (who stood) as I passed, and descending to the lower hall, attended as before, I returned with them to my house.

In the evening a *great* number of ladies; and many ladies, and many gentlemen visited Mrs. Washington.

On this occasion I was dressed in a suit of clothes made at the Woolen Manufactory at Hartford, as the buttons also were.

Saturday, 9th.

Exercised with Mrs. Washington and the children in the coach the 14 miles round. In the afternoon walked round the Battery.

Sunday, 10th.

Went to St. Paul's Chapel in the forenoon—wrote private letters in the afternoon for the Southern mail.

Monday, 11th.

Sent my instructions to the Commissioners (appointed to negotiate a Treaty with the Creek Indians) with the report of their proceedings, to the Senate by the Secretary at War, previous to their being laid before them and the other house in their legislative capacities.

Also communicated to both Houses, transcripts of the adoption and ratification of the New Constitution by the State of North Carolina, with copies of the letter from

His Excellency, Saml. Johnson, President of the Convention, enclosing the same. These were sent by my private Secretary, Mr. Lear.

The Diary of George Washington, from 1789 to 1791, Edited by Benson J. Lossing p. 67.

Exercises, Addresses, Levées and an Aching Tooth

Tuesday, 12th [January, 1790].

Exercised on horseback between 10 and 12—ye riding bad. Previous to this, I sent written messages to both Houses of Congress, informing them that the Secretary at War would lay before them a full and complete statement of the business as it respected the negotiation with the Creek Indians—my instructions to, and the Commissioners' report of their proceedings with those people—the letters and other papers respecting depredations on the western frontiers of Virginia, and District of Kentucky. All of which was for their *full* information, but communicated in confidence, and under injunction that no copies be taken, or communications made of such parts as ought to be kept secret.

About two o'clock a Committee of the Senate waited on me with a copy of their address, in answer to my speech, and requesting to know at what time and place it should be presented, I named my own house, and Thursday next, at 11 o'clock, for the purpose.

Just before the Levee hour, a Committee from the House of Representatives called upon me to know when and where they should deliver their address. I named twelve o'clock on Thursday; but finding it was their wish it should be presented at the Federal Hall, and offering to surrender the Representatives' Chamber for this purpose, by retiring into one of the Committee rooms, and there waiting till I was ready to receive it, I would consider on the place, and let them know my determination before the House should sit to-morrow.

A respectable, though not a full Levee to-day.

Wednesday, 13th.

After duly considering on the place for receiving the address of the House of Representatives, I concluded that it would be best to do it in my own house—first, because it seems most consistent with usage and custom —2d, because there is no third place in the Federal Hall (*prepared*) to which I could call them, and to go into either of the chambers appropriated to the Senate or Representatives, did not appear proper; and 3d, because I had appointed my own house for the Senate to deliver theirs in, and accordingly appointed my own house to receive it.

Thursday, 14th.

At the hours appointed, the Senate and House of Representatives presented their respective addresses—the members of both coming in carriages, and the latter with the Mace preceding the Speaker. The address of the Senate was presented by the Vice-President—and that of the House by the Speaker thereof.

The following gentlemen dined here to-day, viz:

Messrs. Henry and Maclay, of the Senate—and Messrs. Wadsworth, Trumbull, Floyd, Boudinot, Wynkoop, Seney, Page, Lee, and Matthews, of the House of Representatives and Mr. John Trumbull.

Friday, 15th.

Snowing all day—but few ladies and gentlemen as visitors this evening to Mrs. Washington.

Saturday, 16th.

Exercised in the coach with Mrs. Washington and the two children, about 12 o'clock.

Sent the Report of the Post Master General relative to the necessary changes in that office to the Secretary of the Treasury, that it may be laid before Congress—or such parts thereof as may be necessary for their information.

Sunday, 17th.

At home all day—not well.

Monday, 18th.

Still indisposed with an aching tooth, and swelled and inflamed gums.

Tuesday, 19th.

Not much company at the Levee to-day—but the visitors were respectable.

The Diary of George Washington from 1789 to 1791, Edited by Benson J. Lossing, p. 69.

Planning and Discussing a National Capital.

Monday, 28th [March, 1791].

Left Bladensburgh at half after six, & breakfasted at George Town about 8; where, having appointed the Commissioners under the Residence Law to meet me, I found Mr. Johnson one of them (& who is Chief Justice of the State) in waiting—& soon after came in David Stuart, & Danl. Carroll Esqrs. the other two.—A few miles out of Town I was met by the principal Citizens of the place and escorted in by them; and dined at Sutor's tavern (where I also lodged) at a public dinner given by the Mayor & Corporation—previous to which I examined the Surveys of Mr. Ellicot who had been sent to lay out the district of ten miles square for the federal seat; and also the works of Majr. L'Enfant who had been engaged to examine & make a draught of the grds. in the vicinity of George Town and Carrollsburg on the Eastern branch making arrangements for examining the ground myself to morrow with the Commissioners.

Tuesday, 29th.

In a thick mist, and under strong appearances of settled rain (which however did not happen) I set out about seven o'clock, for the purpose above mentioned—

but from the unfavorableness of the day, I derived no great satisfaction from the review.

Finding the interests of the Landholders about George-town and those about Carrollsburgh much at variance and that their fears and jealousies of each were counteracting the public purposes & might prove injurious to its best interests whilst if properly managed they might be made to subserve it—I requested them to meet me at six o'clock this afternoon at my lodgings which they accordingly did.

To this meeting I represented that the contention in which they seemed to be engaged, did not in my opinion comport either with the public interest or that of their own;—that while each party was aiming to obtain the public buildings, they might by placing the matter on a contracted scale, defeat the measure altogether; not only by procrastination but for want of the means necessary to effect the work;—That neither the offer from George-town or Carrollsburgh, separately, was adequate to the end of insuring the object.—That both together did not comprehend more ground nor would afford greater means than was required for the federal City;—and that, instead of contending which of the two should have it they had better, by combining more offers make a common cause of it, and thereby secure it to the district—other arguments were used to show the danger which might result from delay and the good effects that might proceed from a Union.

Dined at Col. Forrest's to day with the Commissioners & others.

Wednesday, 30th.

The parties to whom I addressed myself yesterday evening, having taken the matter into consideration saw the propriety of my observations; and that whilst they were contending for the shadow they might loose the substance; and therefore mutually agreed and entered into articles to surrender for public purposes, one half of the land

they severally possessed within bounds which were designated as necessary for the City to stand with some other stipulations, which were inserted in the instrument which they respectively subscribed.

This business being thus happily finished and some directions given to the Commissioners, the Surveyor and Engineer with respect to the mode of laying out the district—Surveying the grounds for the City & forming them into lots—I left Georgetown—dined in Alexandria & reached Mount Vernon in the evening.

The Diary of George Washington, from 1789 to 1791, Edited by Benson J. Lossing, p. 158.

Resting on Southern Tour at Mount Vernon

Thursday, 31st, [March, 1791].

From this time, until the 7th of April, I remained at Mount Vernon—visiting my Plantations every day.—and was obliged also, consequence of Colo. Henry Lee's declining to accept the command of one of the Regiments of Levies and the request of the Secretary at War to appoint those officers which had been left to Colo. Lee to do for a Battalion to be raised in Virginia East of the Alligany Mountains to delay my journey on this account—and after all, to commit the business as will appear by the letters & for the reasons there mentioned to Colo. Darke's management.

From hence I also wrote letters to the Secretaries of State,—Treasury—and War, in answer to those received on interesting subjects—desiring in case of important occurrences they would hold a consultation and if they were of such a nature as to make my return necessary to give me notice & I would return immediately. My Rout was given them & the time I should be at the particular places therein mentioned.

Thursday, 7 April.

Recommenced my journey with Horses apparently much refreshed and in good spirits.

In attempting to cross the ferry at Colchester with the four Horses hitched to the Chariot by the neglect of the person who stood before them, one of the leaders got overboard when the boat was in swimming water and 50 yards from the shore—with much difficulty he escaped drowning, before he could be disengaged—His struggling frightened the others in such a manner that one after another and in quick succession they all got overboard harnessed & fastened as they were and with the utmost difficulty they were saved & the Carriage escaped being dragged after them, as the whole of it happened in swimming water & at a distance from shore—Providentially—indeed miraculously—by the exertions of people who went off in Boats & jumped into the River as soon as the Batteau was forced into wading water—no damage was sustained by the horses, Carriage or harness.

Proceeded to Dumfries where I dined—after which I visited & drank Tea with my Niece Mrs. Thos. Lee.

Friday, 8th.

Set out about 6 o'clock—breakfasted at Stafford Court House—dined and lodged at my Sister Lewis's in Fredericksburgh.

Saturday, 9th.

Dined at an entertainment given by the Citizens of the town.—Received and answered an address from the Corporation.

Was informed by Mr. Jno. Lewis, who had, not long since been in Richmond that Mr. Patrick Henry had avowed his interest in the Yazoo Company; and made him a tender of admission into it which he declined—but asking if the Company did not expect the Settlement of the lands would be disagreeable to the Indians was answered by Mr. Henry that the Co. intended to apply to Congress for protection—which, if not granted they would have recourse to their own means to protect the settlement—That General

Scott had a certain quantity of land (I think 40,000 acres) in the Company's grant & was to have the command of the force which was to make the establishment—and moreover—that General Muhlenburg had offered £1000 for a certain part of the grant—the quantity I do not recollect if it was mentioned to me.

The Diary of George Washington, from 1780 to 1791, Edited by Benson J. Lossing.
p. 161.

“A Long Journey over the Devil's Own Roads”

The coachman, John Fagan, by birth a Hessian, was tall and burly in person, and an accomplished coachman in every respect. He understood the mechanism of a carriage, and could take to pieces and put together again all the parts, should he meet with any accident on his road. He drove for the President throughout his whole tour of the then Southern States, from Mount Vernon to Savannah, and by Augusta and the interior of South and North Carolina, in the white chariot built by Clarke, of Philadelphia, without the slightest accident or misfortune happening in so long a journey.

On the President's return Clarke was in attendance to learn the success of what he deemed his masterpiece of coach-making. No sooner had the horses stopped at the door of the presidential mansion than the anxious coach-maker was under the body of the white chariot, examining everything with a careful and critical eye, till Fagan shouted from the box,

“All right, Mr. Clarke; all right, sir; not a bolt or screw started in a long journey and over the devil's own roads.”

The delighted mechanic now found his hand grasped in that of the President, who complimented him upon his workmanship, assuring him that it had been sufficiently tested in a great variety of very bad roads. Clarke, the happiest of men, repaired to his shop, in Sixth street, where he informed the people of the success of the white chariot,

the account of which he had received from the President's own lips, when the day ended in a jollification at the coachmaker's.

Recollections of Washington, by His Adopted Son, George Washington Parke Custis, p. 425.

The Gallant "Ladies' Man"

At his wife's receptions . . . Washington did not view himself as host, and "conversed without restraint, generally with women, who rarely had other opportunity of seeing him," which perhaps accounts for the statement of another eye-witness that Washington "looked very much more at ease than at his own official levees." Sullivan adds that "the young ladies used to throng around him, and engaged him in conversation. There were some of the well-remembered belles of the day who imagined themselves to be favorites with him. As these were the only opportunities which they had for conversing with him, they were disposed to use them." In his Southern trip of 1791 Washington noted, with evident pleasure, that he "was visited about 2 o'clock, by a great number of the most respectable ladies of Charleston—the first honor of the kind I had ever experienced and it was flattering as it was singular." And that this attention was not merely the respect due to a great man is shown in the letter of a Virginian woman, who wrote to her correspondent in 1777, that when "General Washington throws off the Hero and takes up the chatty agreeable Companion—he can be down right impudent sometimes—such impudence, Fanny, as you and I like."

Another feminine compliment paid him was a highly laudatory poem which was enclosed to him, with a letter begging forgiveness, to which he playfully answered,—

"You apply to me, my dear Madam, for absolution as tho' I was your father Confessor; and as tho' you had committed a crime, great in itself, yet of the venial class. You have reason good—for I find myself strangely disposed

to be a very indulgent ghostly adviser on this occasion; and, notwithstanding 'you are the most offending Soul alive' (that is, if it is a crime to write elegant Poetry) yet if you will come and dine with me on Thursday, and go thro' the proper course of penitence which shall be prescribed I will strive hard to assist you in expiating these poetical trespasses on this side of purgatory. Nay more, if it rests with me to direct your future lucubrations, I shall certainly urge you to a repetition of the same conduct, on purpose to shew what an admirable knack you have at confession and reformation; and so without more hesitation, I shall venture to command the muse, not to be restrained by ill-grounded timidity, but to go on and prosper. You see, Madam, when once the woman has tempted us, and we have tasted the forbidden fruit, there is no such thing as checking our appetites, whatever the consequences may be. You will, I dare say, recognize our being the genuine Descendants of those who are reputed to be our great Progenitors."

The True George Washington, Paul Leicester Ford, p. 109.

"Gentlemen, We Are Punctual Here"

Washington accomplished the most part of his great works with apparent ease, by a rigid observance of punctuality. It is known that whenever he assigned to meet Congress at noon, he never failed to be passing the door when the clock struck twelve.

His dining hour was at four, when he always sat down to his table, allowing only five minutes for the variation of timepieces, whether his guests were present or not. It was frequently the case with new members of Congress, that they did not arrive until dinner was nearly half over; and he would remark:

"Gentlemen, we are punctual here; my cook never asks whether the company has arrived, but whether the hour has."

Entertaining Anecdotes of Washington (Boston, 1833), p. 93.

“Hearty Fits of Laughter”

More than one instance is told of Washington being surprised into hearty fits of laughter, even during the war. We have recorded one caused by the sudden appearance of old General Putnam on horseback, with a female prisoner *en croupe*. The following is another which occurred at the camp at Morristown. Washington had purchased a young horse of great spirit and power. A braggadocio of the army, vain of his horsemanship, asked the privilege of breaking it. Washington gave his consent, and with some of his officers attended to see the horse receive his first lesson. After much preparation, the pretender to equitation mounted into the saddle and was making a great display of his science, when the horse suddenly planted his forefeet, threw up his heels, and gave the unlucky Gambado a somersault over his head. Washington, a thorough horseman, and quick to perceive the ludicrous in these matters, was so convulsed with laughter that we are told the tears ran down his cheeks.

Still another instance is given, which occurred at the return of peace, when he was sailing in a boat on the Hudson, and was so overcome by the drollery of a story told by Major Fairlie of New York, of facetious memory, that he fell back in the boat in a paroxysm of laughter.

Life of George Washington, Washington Irving, Vol. IV, p. 539.

Leading Events, 1786 to 1790.

Shays's Rebellion in Western Massachusetts	1786
Convention meets and frames the Constitution	1787
States adopt the Constitution	1788
Settlement of Cincinnati	1788
Washington elected President	1789
First inauguration, in New York City April 30,	1789
United States Government organized	1789
First Census of the United States	1790
Removal of National Capital to Philadelphia	1790

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE NATIONAL CAPITAL REMOVED TO PHILADELPHIA

Removing to Philadelphia

“PHILADELPHIA, Sept. 5th. 1790.

“*Dear Sir,*

“After a pleasant journey we arrived in this city about 2 o'clock on Thursday last. Tomorrow we proceed (if Mrs. Washington's health will permit, for she had been much indisposed since she came here) towards Mount Vernon.

“The house of Mr. R. Morris had, previous to my arrival, been taken by the Corporation for my residence. It is the best they could get. It is, I believe, the best *Single house* in the City; yet without additions, it is inadequate to the *commodious* accommodation of my family. These, I believe will be made.

“The first floor contains only two public Rooms (except one for the *upper* Servants). The second floor will have two public (drawing) Rooms & with the aid of one Room with the partition in it, in the back building will be sufficient for the accommodation of Mrs. Washington & the children & their maids—besides affording me a small place for a private study and dressing room. The third story will furnish you and Mrs. Lear with a good lodging Room,—a public office (for there is no place below for one) and two Rooms for the Gentlemen of the family. The Garret has four good Rooms which must serve Mr. and Mrs. Hyde (unless they should prefer the Room over the Wash house), William—and such servants as it may not be better to place in the addition (as proposed) to the back building. There is a room over the Stable (without a fireplace, but by means of a Stove) may serve the Coachman and Postillions and

there is the smoke house, which possibly may be more useful to me for the accommodation of servants, than for smoking of meat. The intention of the addition to the back Building is to provide a Servant's Hall, and one or two (as it will afford) lodging Rooms for the Servants, especially those who are coupled. There is a very good Wash house adjoining the Kitchen (under one of the Rooms already mentioned). There are good Stables, but for 12 horses only, and a Coach house which will hold all my carriages.

"The pressure of business under which I laboured for several days before I left New York, allowed me no time to enquire who of the female servants it was proposed or thought advisable to remove here, besides the wives of the footmen,—namely, James and Fidas. The Washerwomen, I believe, are good, but as they or one of them at least, has a family of children—quere, whether it is necessary to incumber the march,—and the family afterwards with them? I neither contradict or advise the measure—your own judgment, and the circumstances of the case must decide the point:—but unless there is better reason than I am acquainted with for bringing Mrs. Lewis, her daughter and their families along, they had better, I should conceive be left:—but as I never investigated the subject, I will give no decisive opinion thereon.

"As I have got to the end of the paper and am tired, I shall only add that your letter of the 3d. with its enclosures came safe—and that Mrs. Washington joins me in best wishes for Mrs. Lear and yourself. I am sincerely & affectionately—

"Yrs.

"P. S.

"In a fortnight or 20 days from this time, it is expected Mr. Morris will have removed out of the house. It is proposed to add bow windows to the two public Rooms in the South front of the house, but as all the other apartments will be close and secure the sooner after that time you

can be in the house, with the furniture, the better, that you may be well fixed and see how matters go on during my absence.

“MR. LEAR.”

Letters and Recollections of George Washington, Tobias Lear, p. 3.

The Pagoda, Lustre, Franklin Stoves, Chariot and Mangle

“MOUNT VERNON, Sept. 27th. 1790.

“*Dear Sir,*

“Since my last to you (the date I do not recollect, keeping no copies of my letters to you) I have recd. yours of the 17th. & 20th. Inst. and shall answer such parts of them as require it.

“I am glad to find that the house according to Mr. Morris’s notification to you will be ready about the time you had made arrangements for the removal of my furniture, the mode of doing which, is, I am persuaded, the cheapest and best. How have you disposed (for safety) of the Pagoda? It is a delicate piece of stuff and will require to be tenderly handled.

“I expected that Mr. Macomb, if he found that no other person was disposed to take the house off my hands, would endeavor to impose his own terms; and allowing me only £100 for seven months use of it, when the rent (independent of the houses I put on the lots) is £400, is a pretty strong evidence of it. And if you do not take some measures to see what can be had for the Wash house and Stable, he will impose his own terms there also. But after all, we are in his power, and he must do as he pleases with us.

“As the Lustre is paid for & securely packed up and may suit the largest drawing Room at Mr. Morris’s, I do not incline to part with it; the Franklin Stoves and other fixtures, if they cannot be disposed of without loss, must be brought round with the other furniture: we may find use for them. Such things as are freighted in the common way (if the vessel

you desired Colo. Biddle to procure is unable to carry the whole) had better be of the kinds which require least care.

"The sale of the old Charriot was proper, for although the price is small it will be so much saved for the public. If much worn or lumbering articles could be disposed of to any tolerable amount, might it not be better to sell them at New York & buy (if necessary) new ones at Philadelphia, than to pay freight for them round?

"Mrs. Morris has a mangle (I think they are called) for Ironing of Clothes, which, as it is fixed in the place where it is commonly used, she proposed to leave and take mine. To this I have no objection provided mine is *equally* good and convenient; but if I should obtain any advantage, besides that of its being up, and ready for use, I am not inclined to receive it.

"Mrs. Washington and all of this family unite in best wishes for you and Mrs. Lear, and I am your sincere friend and
"Affectionate Servant,"

[G. WASHINGTON.]

Letters and Recollections of George Washington, Tobias Lear, p. 13.

Rather "Plain and Elegant" than "Rich and Elegant"

Congress reassembled, according to adjournment, on the first Monday in December, at Philadelphia, which was now, for a time, the seat of government. A house belonging to Mr. Robert Morris, the financier, had been hired by Washington for his residence, and at his request, had undergone additions and alterations "in a plain and neat, and not by any means in an extravagant style."

His secretary, Mr. Lear, had made every preparation for his arrival and accommodation, and, among other things, had spoken of the rich and elegant style in which the state carriage was fitted up.

"I had rather have heard," replied Washington, "that my repaired coach was plain and elegant than rich and elegant."

Life of George Washington, Washington Irving, Vol. V, p. 114.



By Houdon



By Ceracchi

TWO BUSTS OF WASHINGTON

Secretary Humphreys' Poetic License

"The President's mansion was so limited in accommodation that three of his secretaries were compelled to occupy one room—Humphreys, Lewis, and Nelson.

About this time Humphreys was composing his 'Widow of Malabar.' Lewis and Nelson, both young men, were content, after the labors of the day, to enjoy a good night's repose. But this was often denied them; for Humphreys, when in the vein, would rise from his bed at any hour, and with stentorian voice, recite his verses. The young men, roused from their slumbers, and rubbing their eyes, beheld a great, burly figure, *en chemise*, striding across the floor, reciting with great emphasis, particular passages from his poem, and calling on his room-mates for their approbation. Having in this way, for a considerable time, 'murdered the sleep' of his associates, Humphreys, at length, wearied by his exertions, would sink upon his pillow in a kind of dreamy languor. So sadly were the young secretaries annoyed by the frequent outbursts of the poet's imagination, that it was remarked of them that to the end of their lives . . . they were never known to evince the slightest taste for poetry."

Quoted from *The National Intelligencer*, in *The Pictorial Life of General Washington*, J. Frost, LL.D., p. 509.

Lafayette Presents the Key of the Bastile

In concluding his letter, he writes: "Permit me, my dear General, to offer you a picture of the Bastile, such as it was some days after I had given orders for its demolition. I make you homage, also, of the principal key of this fortress of despotism. It is a tribute which I owe you, as son to my adopted father, as *aide-de-camp* to my general, as missionary of liberty to its patriarch."

Thomas Paine was to have been the bearer of this key, but he forwarded it to Washington from London. "I feel myself happy," writes he, "in being the person through whom the marquis has conveyed this early trophy of the

spoils of despotism, and the first ripe fruits of American principles, transplanted into Europe, to his great master and patron. That the principles of America opened the Bastile is not to be doubted, and, therefore, the key comes to the right place."

Washington received the key with reverence, as "a token of the victory gained by liberty over despotism"; and it is still preserved at Mount Vernon, as a precious historical relic.

Life of George Washington, Washington Irving, Vol. V, p. 106.

The First Division into Parties

About this time Washington received a unique present—the key of the Bastile—from his old associate Lafayette, who was at that time the most prominent figure in the French Revolution, that political change not having yet excited the ambitions of aspiring thieves and murderers. The first President of the American republic had every reason to sympathize with his ally of a few years before, and wrote many letters filled with expressions of hope and cheer. The more noisy class, however, of American sympathizers with the French republicans was led by Jefferson, who, with all his ability, never could distinguish between abstract theories and the men who professed them, so the struggle in France provoked a steady struggle at the American capital, which at the end of 1790, was no longer New York, but Philadelphia. Both cities were gainers by the change; the Quaker city had the satisfaction of having the national government within its own geographical limits, and New York could cease to devote its entire attention to political rumors.

The first year in Philadelphia was marked by the division of the people into parties, not on any grounds of necessity, but because two members of the cabinet—Hamilton and Jefferson—distrusted each other. These wise men—for wise they certainly were in many things—were almost evenly balanced in idiocy about things that

they did not understand. Hamilton urged the establishment of a national bank; that was enough to make Jefferson the violent enemy of banks of all kinds, although he was utterly ignorant of the principles of finance and always remained so until he made Albert Gallatin the custodian of his conscience so far as it affected Treasury affairs. Jefferson also continued to insist that Hamilton was one of a party that wanted to establish a monarchy—a fancy the source of which no one has ever been able to find in any manner creditable to Jefferson's sense. Hamilton's suspicions consisted principally in imagining that Jefferson was a dangerous man, and as he himself had been a soldier and was afraid of nobody, he never lost a chance to strike back at the Secretary of State. The first followers the combatants obtained were from the Cabinet itself, Randolph uniformly siding with Jefferson, and Knox with Hamilton, both Randolph and Knox being far more ignorant than their principals about the points over which disputes occurred. Then members of Congress began to take sides, the people of Philadelphia followed, and the general public came later into a battle that was utterly unnecessary but nevertheless full of fun for the mass of the people, who had nothing to lose and could spare unlimited quantities of talk, which was the only ammunition called for. The rise of parties meant merely the fall of man and parties continue to exist because when man falls on account of an overload of prejudices, he finds it hard work to get up again.

Fortunately the Cabinet discussions were not all on politics. The Indians were troublesome on the border, as Indians always will be when swindled and abused by traders and land-grabbers, and expeditions sent against them had cost much money and many men and brought nothing but disaster. Congressmen, too, had learned the art of fighting viciously, and the rival political newspapers of the capital never let the truth stand in the way of a cutting paragraph, so Jefferson and Hamilton did not monopolize the fighting.

George Washington, John Habberton, p. 283.

The Discharging of Reuben Rouzy and His Debt

One Reuben Rouzy, of Virginia, owed the great general about 1,000 pounds. While President of the United States, one of his agents brought an action for the money; judgment was obtained, and execution issued against the body of the defendant, who was taken to jail. He had a considerable landed estate, but this kind of property cannot be sold in Virginia for debts, unless at the discretion of the person. He had a large family, and for the sake of his children preferred lying in jail to selling his land.

A friend hinted to him that probably General Washington did not know anything of the proceedings and it might be well to send him a petition, with a statement of the circumstances. He did so; and the very next post from Philadelphia, after the arrival of the petition in that city, brought him an order for his immediate release, together with a full discharge, and a severe reprimand to the agent for having acted in such a manner.

Poor Rouzy was in consequence restored to his family, who never laid down their heads at night without presenting prayers to Heaven for their "beloved Washington." Providence smiled upon the labors of the grateful family, and in a few years Rouzy enjoyed the exquisite pleasure of being able to lay the 1,000 pounds at the feet of the truly great man. Washington reminded him that the debt was discharged. Rouzy replied that the debt of the family to the Father of his Country and preserver of their parent could never be discharged; and the General, to avoid the pleasing importunity of the grateful Virginian, who would not be denied, accepted the money,—only, however, to divide it among Rouzy's children, which he immediately did.

Entertaining Anecdotes of Washington (Boston, 1833), p. 89.

"His Horse Levées"

I asked Mr. Gray if he remembered the Custis children. "Yes," he said; "I often saw them at the windows, or driving out with Mrs. Washington in her English coach."

They did not seem to have left a very vivid and human impression on his memory. With their fine clothes and company manners, with their attendants, tutors, dancing and music masters, they must have seemed very strange, inaccessible, and unenviable little personages to all the happy, free-and-easy children of the neighborhood.

"Do you remember Washington's *levées* and Mrs. Washington's drawing-rooms?" I asked.

"Yes, I remember hearing *about* them. All the evening parties were over by nine o'clock, and the President's house was dark and silent by ten. They were great affairs, but I was too young to know much about them. I attended his *horse-levées*. I was very fond of visiting his stables, early in the morning, at the hour when he always went to inspect them. I liked to see him at that work, for he seemed to enjoy it himself. Like General Grant, he was a great lover of horses. I can almost think I see him now, come striding out from his house across the yard to the stables, booted and spurred, but bareheaded and in his shirt-sleeves."

"Washington in his shirt-sleeves!"

"Yes, madam; but he was always Washington. The grooms stood aside, silent and respectful, while he examined every stall and manger, and regularly went over every horse—I mean, he passed over a portion of its coat his large white hand, always looking to see if it was soiled, or if any loose hairs had come off on it. If so, the groom was reprimanded and ordered to do his work over. Generally, however, Washington would say: 'Very well. Now, John, get out Prescott and Jackson' (his white chargers). 'I'll be ready by the time you come round.' "

"Did he ride at so early an hour?"

"Yes; generally between five and six of a pleasant morning he was off; and he almost always rode up to Point-no-Point, on the Delaware, a little way above Richmond. He was a fine horseman, and, being a long-bodied man, looked grandly on horseback. It was a sight worth getting up early to see."

"Such an Example of Luxury and Extravagance!"

We have mentioned Sam. Fraunces, the President's steward. He was a rare Whig in the Revolutionary day, and attached no little importance to his person and character, from the circumstance that the memorable parting of the commander-in-chief with his old and long endeared companions-in-arms had taken place at his tavern in New York.

The steward was a man of talent and considerable taste in the line of his profession, but was at the same time ambitious, fond of display, and regardless of expense. This produced continued difficulties between the President and certainly one of the most devotedly attached to him of all his household.

The expenses of the presidential mansion were settled weekly; and, upon the bills being presented, the President would rate his steward soundly upon his expensiveness, saying that, while he wished to live conformably to his high station, liberally, nay handsomely, he abhorred waste and extravagance, and insisted that his household should be conducted with due regard to economy and usefulness.

Fraunces would promise amendment, and the next week the same scene would be re-enacted in all its parts, the steward retiring in tears, and exclaiming, "Well, he may discharge me; he may kill me if he will; but while he is President of the United States, and I have the honor to be his steward, his establishment shall be supplied with the very best of everything that the whole country can afford."

Washington was remarkably fond of fish. It was the habit for New England ladies frequently to prepare the codfish in a very nice manner, and send it enveloped in cloths, so as to arrive quite warm for the President's Saturday dinner, he always eating codfish on that day in compliment to his New England recollections.

It happened that a single shad was caught in the Delaware in February, and brought to the Philadelphia market for sale. Fraunces pounced upon it with the speed of an

osprey, regardless of price, but charmed that he had secured a delicacy that, above all others, he knew would be agreeable to the palate of his chief.

When the fish was served, Washington suspected a departure from his orders touching the provisions to be made for his table, and said to Fraunces, who stood at his post at the sideboard:

"What fish is this?"

"A shad, a very fine shad," was the reply; "I knew your excellency was particularly fond of this kind of fish, and was so fortunate as to procure this one in market—a solitary one, and the first of the season."

"The price, sir; the price!" continued Washington, in a stern commanding tone; "the price, sir?"

"—Three—three—three dollars," stammered out the conscience-stricken steward.

"Take it away," thundered the chief; "take it away, sir; it shall never be said that my table sets such an example of luxury and extravagance."

Poor Fraunces tremblingly obeyed, and the first shad of the season was removed untouched, to be speedily discussed by the gourmands of the servants' hall.

Recollections of Washington, by His Adopted Son, George Washington Parke Custis, p. 420.

"Here!"

An Englishman in Philadelphia, speaking of the presidency of Washington, was expressing a wish to behold him.

"There he goes!" replied the American, pointing to a tall, erect, dignified personage passing on the other side of the street.

"That General Washington!" exclaimed the Englishman; "where is his guard?"

"Here!" exclaimed the American, striking his bosom with emphasis.

Entertaining Anecdotes of Washington (Boston, 1833), p. 127.

Fact, Tact and Fiction

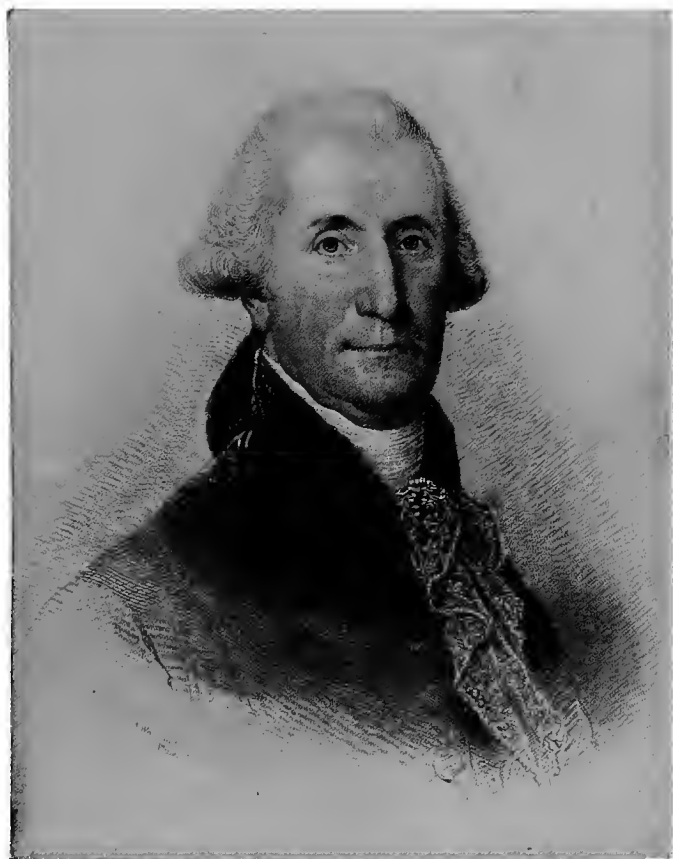
Washington showed that he was becoming an adept in diplomacy when he tendered his friend Patrick Henry a place in the government after assuring himself that the offer would be declined with a profusion of thanks. Then the tactful way he evaded the importunity of a French anarchist, named Volney, was worthy of Franklin or even Lincoln. On several accounts he did not wish to refuse to do a favor for the visiting Frenchman, nor did he care to endorse a red republican with a wholesale introduction. So he wrote on his card, simply:

C. Volney needs no recommendation from G ^o . Washington

Contrary to the universal notion that practical politics cannot go hand in hand with strict truthfulness, it may be argued that Washington was considered fairly successful in politics. "Parson" Weems is responsible for the general belief that Washington, when a little boy with a little hatchet, "could not tell a lie," but it is asseverated that he overcame this nervous weakness after he became a general and a statesman.

As a general, he proved himself an expert in devising decoys, and ruses which always deceived the British generals, yet when they tried the same tactics with him he saw through them all, so that they managed only to put him on instead of off his guard, and bobbed up, laughing in his sleeve, all ready for them, instead of rushing off in the wrong direction as they had tried to induce him to do.

Washington knew very well that the only way to keep a secret is not to let any one know you have one to keep. In several critical junctures the commander-in-chief did not dare let even his confidential officers know the true state of affairs. Once when he divulged a secret stratagem to a certain colonel who had to be informed in order that he



Engraved by H. B. Hall from the Painting by A. Wertmüller.

AN UNFAMILIAR PORTRAIT OF WASHINGTON

might coöperate with the general in its execution, he wrote at the end of his instructions, "For Heaven's sake keep this to yourself; for, if known, it would be fatal to us!"

"All is fair in love and war," and Washington was generally in one or the other—if not both at the same time. Some humorous writers, nowadays, pretend to be shocked because Washington resorted to feints and counterfeits to deceive the enemy, and to diplomatic strategy while President. But it is not widely known that General Washington originated the extravagant joke against the Jersey mosquito. Having his headquarters in New Jersey much of the time, he had excellent opportunities for observing that interesting insect and, one day, he spoke of mosquitoes to an Englishman named Weld, who went home and wrote in his "Travels in America," that "General Washington told me that . . . they used to bite through the thickest boot."

An eminent divine, not seeing the joke, rushed to the rescue with a tarradiddle to save Washington's reputation, stating in another book that "a gentleman of great respectability who was present when General Washington made the observation referred to, told me that he said when describing those mosquitoes to Mr. Weld, that they 'bit through his stockings above the boots.' "

Now, any one who knew about army boots knew that they came far above the stockings, and for a mosquito to bite through them was still more impossible. Washington needed to be defended from his friends, while he was defeating his enemies. His reputation has suffered many things from "gentlemen of great respectability" who never could see through an innocent joke.

W. W.

General St. Clair Made Commander-in-chief

In the course of the present session, Congress received and granted the applications of Kentucky and Vermont for admission into the Union, the former after August, 1792; the latter immediately.

On the 3d of March the term of this first Congress

expired. Washington, after reciting various important measures that had been effected, testified to the great harmony and cordiality which had prevailed. In some few instances, he admitted, particularly in passing the law for higher duties on spirituous liquors, and more especially on the subject of the bank, "the line between the southern and eastern interests had appeared more strongly marked than could be wished," the former against and the latter in favor of those measures, "but the debates," adds he, "were conducted with temper and candor."

As the Indians on the northwest side of the Ohio still continued their hostilities, one of the last measures of Congress had been an act to augment the military establishments, and to place in the hands of the executive more ample means for the protection of the frontiers. A new expedition against the belligerent tribes had, in consequence, been projected. General St. Clair, actually governor of the territory west of the Ohio, was appointed commander-in-chief, of the forces employed.

Life of George Washington, Washington Irving, Vol. V, p. 120.

Planning and Building "the President's Palace"

While the capital was moved about, Washington gave all the attention he could to planning and building the Federal City. They went to work to erect, first of all, the Capitol and the "President's Palace," as Washington called it. He presided at the laying of the cornerstone of the Mansion, October, 13, 1792, three hundred years, almost to a day, after the discovery of America by Columbus.

There was considerable controversy over this matter. Certain self-appointed "watchdogs of the treasury" claimed that one building would do for both purposes—that the President could live in a wing of the Capitol, or the Houses of Congress could meet in two wings of the "President's Palace." This seems rather ridiculous to us now, but we must bear in mind that the people were few and money was

scarce. New York, Philadelphia, Boston and Baltimore were only small towns then; a man with ten thousand dollars was wealthy, and men "worth" one hundred thousand were fewer than multimillionaires to-day. So it was a wonderful thing that, through the great influence of Washington and others, Congress appropriated the then magnificent sum of three hundred thousand dollars for the "palace" alone.

A prize of five hundred dollars had been offered for the best plans for the building. James Hoban, a young Irish architect of Charleston, South Carolina, won this prize, for the design of a palace like the palace of the Duke of Leinster, in Dublin. Hoban was engaged as superintendent of construction, and it took about seven years to get the building ready to live in.

The Story of the White House, Wayne Whipple, p. 14.

How the President Received the News

The President was dining, when an officer arrived from the western army with despatches, his orders requiring that he should deliver them only to the commander-in-chief. The President retired, but soon appeared, bearing in his hand an open letter. No change was perceptible in his countenance, as addressing the company he observed that the army of St. Clair had been surprised by the Indians, and was cut to pieces. The company soon after retired. The President repaired to his private parlor, attended by Mr. Lear, his principal secretary, and a scene ensued of which our pen can give but a feeble description.

The chief paced the room in hurried strides. In his agony, he struck his clenched hands with fearful force against his forehead, and in a paroxysm of anguish exclaimed:

"That brave army, so officered—Butler, Ferguson, Kirkwood—such officers are not to be replaced in a day—that brave army cut to pieces. O God!"

Then turning to the secretary, who stood amazed at a

spectacle so unique, as Washington in all his terrors, he continued:

"It was here, sir, in this very room, that I conversed with St. Clair, on the eve of his departure for the West. I remarked, 'I shall not interfere, General, with the orders of General Knox, and the War Department; they are sufficiently comprehensive and judicious; but, as an old soldier, as one whose early life was particularly engaged in Indian warfare, I feel myself competent to counsel; General St. Clair, in three words, beware of surprise; trust not the Indian, leave not your arms for a moment; and when you halt for the night, be sure to fortify your camp—again and again, General, *beware of surprise!*' And yet that brave army surprised, and cut to pieces, with Butler and a host of others slain, O God!"

Here the struggle ended, as with mighty efforts the hero chained down the rebellious giant of passion, and Washington became "himself again." In a subdued tone of voice, he proceeded: "But he shall have justice done; yes, long, faithful, and meritorious services have their claims. I repeat—he shall have justice."

Thus concluded a scene as remarkable as rare. It served to display this great man as nature had made him, with passions fierce and impetuous, which, like the tornado of the tropics, would burst for a while in awful grandeur, and then show, in higher relief, a serene and brilliant sky.

The first interview of the President with St. Clair, after the fatal fourth of November, was nobly impressive. The unfortunate general, worn down by age, disease and the hardship of a frontier campaign, assailed by the press, and with the current of popular opinion setting hard against him, repaired to his chief, as to a shelter from the fury of so many elements. Washington extended his hand to one who appeared in no new character; for, during the whole of a long life, misfortune seemed to have "marked him for her own." Poor old St. Clair hobbled up to his chief,

seized the offered hand in both of his, and gave vent to his feelings in an audible manner. He was subsequently tried by a commission of government, and proved to have been *unfortunate*.

In the Alexandria Gazette, George Washington Parke Custis, July 12, 1827.

The Same Scene Described Thirty Years Later

Towards the close of a winter's day in 1791, an officer in uniform was seen to dismount in front of the President's in Philadelphia, and, giving the bridle to his servant, knock at the door of his mansion. Learning from the porter that the President was at dinner, he said he was on public business and had despatches for the President. A servant was sent into the dining-room to give the information to Mr. Lear, who left the table and went into the hall where the officer repeated what he had said. Mr. Lear replied that, as the President's secretary, he would take charge of the despatches and deliver them at the proper time. The officer made answer that he had just arrived from the western army, and his orders were to deliver them with all promptitude, and to the President in person; but that he would wait his directions. Mr. Lear returned, and in a whisper imparted to the President what had passed. General Washington rose from the table, and went to the officer. He was back in a short time, made a word of apology for his absence, but no allusion to the cause of it. He had company that day. Everything went on as usual. Dinner over, the gentlemen passed to the drawing-room of Mrs. Washington, which was open in the evening. The General spoke courteously to every lady in the room, as was his custom. His hours were early, and by ten o'clock all the company had gone. Mrs. Washington and Mr. Lear remained. Soon Mrs. Washington left the room.

The General now walked backward and forward slowly for some minutes without speaking. Then he sat down on a sofa by the fire, telling Mr. Lear to sit down. To this

moment there had been no change in his manner since his interruption at table. Mr. Lear now perceived emotion. This rising in him, he broke out suddenly, "It's all over—St. Clair's defeated—routed; the officers nearly all killed, the men by wholesale; the rout complete—too shocking to think of—and a surprise into the bargain!"

He uttered all this with great vehemence. Then he paused, got up from the sofa, and walked about the room several times, agitated but saying nothing. Near the door he stopped short and stood still a few seconds, when his wrath became terrible.

"Yes" he burst forth, "here on this very spot, I took leave of him; I wished him success and honor; 'you have your instructions,' I said, 'from the Secretary of War, I had a strict eye to them, and will add but one word,—Beware of a surprise! I repeat it, BEWARE OF A SURPRISE—you know how the Indians fight us.' He went off with that as my last solemn warning thrown into his ears. And yet! to suffer that army to be cut to pieces, hack'd, butchered, tomahawk'd by a surprise—the very thing I guarded him against! O God, O God, he's worse than a murderer! how can he answer it to his country; —the blood of the slain is upon him—the curse of widows and orphans—the curse of Heaven!"

This torrent came out in tones appalling. His very frame shook. 'It was awful!' said Mr. Lear. 'More than once he threw his hands up as he hurled imprecations upon St. Clair.' Mr. Lear remained speechless, awed into breathless silence.

The roused chief sat down on the sofa once more. He seemed conscious of his passion, and uncomfortable. He was silent. His warmth beginning to subside, he at length said in an altered voice: "This must not go beyond this room." Another pause followed—a longer one—when he said in a tone quite low, "General St. Clair shall have justice; I looked hastily through the despatches, saw the

whole disaster but not all the particulars; I will receive him without displeasure; I will hear him without prejudice; he shall have full justice."

He was now, said Mr. Lear, perfectly calm. Half an hour had gone by. The storm was over; and no sign of it was afterwards seen in his conduct or heard in his conversation. The result is known. The whole case was investigated by Congress. St. Clair was exculpated and regained the confidence Washington had in him when appointing him to that command. He had put himself into the thickest of the fight and escaped unhurt, though so ill as to be carried on a litter, and unable to mount his horse without help.

Washington in Domestic Life, Richard Rush, (1857) p. 65.

CHAPTER XXXIV

HIS SECOND TERM

After a Long and Painful Conflict of Feelings

It was after a long and painful conflict of feelings that Washington consented to be a candidate for re-election. There was no opposition on the part of the public, and the vote for him in the electoral college was unanimous. In a letter to a friend, he declared himself gratefully impressed by so distinguished and honorable a testimony of public approbation and confidence. In truth he had been apprehensive of being elected by but a meager majority, which he acknowledged would have been a matter of chagrin.

George Clinton, of New York, was held up for the vice-presidency, in opposition to John Adams; but the latter was re-elected by a majority of twenty-seven electoral votes.

But though gratified to find that the hearts of his countrymen were still with him, it was with no emotion of pleasure that Washington looked forward to another term of public duty, and a prolonged absence from the quiet retirement of Mount Vernon.

On his birthday (Feb. 22) many of the members of Congress were desirous of waiting on him in testimony of respect as chief magistrate of the Union, and a motion was made to adjourn for half an hour for the purpose. It met with serious opposition as a species of homage—it was setting up an idol dangerous to liberty—it had a bias toward monarchy!

To guide him on the coming occasion, Washington called the heads of departments together, and desired they would consult with one another, and agree on any

changes they might consider for the better, assuring them he would willingly conform to whatever they should advise.

They held such consultation, and ultimately gave their individual opinions in writing, with regard to the time, manner and place of the President's taking the oath of office. As they were divided in opinion, and gave no positive advice as to any change, no change was made. On the 4th of March, the oath was publicly administered to Washington by Mr. Justice Cushing, in the Senate Chamber, in the presence of the heads of departments, foreign ministers, such members of the House of Representatives as were in town, and as many spectators as could be accommodated.

Life of George Washington, Washington Irving, Vol. V, p. 170.

From Washington's Second Inaugural

*(Delivered in the Senate Chamber, Philadelphia,
March 4, 1793.)*

"Fellow-Citizens:

"I am again called upon, by the voice of my country, to execute the functions of its chief magistrate. When the occasion proper for it shall arrive, I shall endeavor to express the high sense I entertain of this distinguished honor, and of the confidence which has been reposed in me by the people of United America. Previous to the execution of any official act of the President, the Constitution requires an oath of office. This oath I am now about to take and in your presence; that, if it shall be found during my administration of the government, I have in any instance violated willingly or knowingly the injunction thereof, I may, besides incurring constitutional punishment, be subject to the upbraiding of all who are now witnesses of the present solemn ceremony."

Writings of Washington, Edited by Lawrence B. Evans, Ph. D., p. 350.

Reading His Opening Address to Congress

Of the awe and reverence which the presence of Washington inspired we have many records. "I stood," says one writer, "before the door of the Hall of Congress in Philadelphia when the carriage of the President drew up. It was a white coach, or rather of a light cream color, painted on the panels with beautiful groups representing the four seasons. As Washington alighted and ascending the steps, paused on the platform, he was preceded by two gentlemen bearing large white wands, who kept back the eager crowd that pressed on every side. At that moment I stood so near I might have touched his clothes; but I should as soon have thought of touching an electric battery. I was penetrated with deepest awe. Nor was this the feeling of the schoolboy I then was. It pervaded, I believe, every human being that approached Washington; and I have been told that even in his social hours, this feeling in those who shared them never suffered intermission. I saw him a hundred times afterward, but never with any other than the same feeling. The Almighty, who raised up for our hour of need a man so peculiarly prepared for its whole dread responsibility, seems to have put a stamp of sacredness upon his instrument. The first sight of the man struck the eye with involuntary homage and prepared everything around him to obey.

"At the time I speak of he stood in profound silence and had the statue-like air which mental greatness alone can bestow. As he turned to enter the building, and was ascending the staircase to the Congressional hall, I glided along unseen, almost under the cover of the skirts of his dress, and entered into the lobby of the House which was in session to receive him.

"At Washington's entrance there was a profound silence. House, lobbies, gallery, all were wrapped in deepest attention. And the souls of the entire assemblage seemed peering from their eyes as the noble figure deliberately and unaffectedly

advanced up the broad aisle of the hall between ranks of standing senators and members, and slowly ascended the steps leading to the speaker's chair.

"The President having seated himself remained in silence, and the members took their seats, waiting for the speech. No house of worship was ever more profoundly still than that large and crowded chamber.

"Washington was dressed precisely as Stuart has painted him in full-length portrait—in a full suit of the richest black velvet, with diamond knee-buckles and square silver buckles set upon shoes japanned with most scrupulous neatness; black silk stockings, his shirt ruffled at the breast and waist, a light dress sword, his hair profusely powdered, fully dressed so as to project at the sides, and gathered behind in a silk bag ornamented with a large rose of black ribbon. He held his cocked hat, which had a large black cockade on one side of it, in his hand, as he advanced toward the chair, and when seated, laid it on the table.

"At length, thrusting his hand within the side of his coat, he drew forth a roll of manuscript which he opened, and rising, read in a rich, deep, full, sonorous voice his opening address to Congress. His enunciation was deliberate, justly emphasized, very distinct, and accompanied with an air of deep solemnity as being the utterance of a mind conscious of the whole responsibility of its position, but not oppressed by it. There was ever about the man something which impressed one with the conviction that he was exactly and fully equal to what he had to do. He was never hurried; never negligent; but seemed ever prepared for the occasion, be it what it might. In his study, in his parlor, at a *levée*, before Congress, at the head of the army, he seemed ever to be just what the situation required. He possessed, in a degree never equaled by any human being I ever saw, the strongest, most ever-present sense of propriety."

Heroes Every Child Should Know, Edited by Hamilton Wright Mabie, p. 284.

**"The Proceedings of a Person Unfortunately Minister
Plenipotentiary"**

In a message to both Houses, on the 5th of December, concerning foreign relations, Washington spoke feelingly with regard to those with the representative and executive bodies in France: "It is with extreme concern that I have to inform you that the proceedings of a person whom they have unfortunately appointed their minister plenipotentiary here, have breathed nothing of the friendly spirit of the nation which sent him; their tendency, on the contrary, has been to involve us in war abroad, and discord and anarchy at home. So far as his acts, or those of his agents, have threatened our immediate commitment in the war, or flagrant insult to the authority of the laws, their effect has been counteracted by the ordinary cognizance of the laws, and by an exertion of the powers confided to me. Where their danger was not imminent, they have been borne with, from sentiments of regard for his nation; from a sense of their friendship toward us; from a conviction, that they would not suffer us to remain long exposed to the action of a person, who has so little respected our mutual dispositions; and, I will add, from a reliance on the firmness of our fellow-citizens in their principles of peace and order."

John Adams, speaking of this passage of the message, says: "The President has given Genet a bolt of thunder." He questioned, however, whether Washington would be supported in it by the two Houses—"although he stands at present, as high in the admiration and confidence of the people as he ever did, I expect he will find many bitter and desperate enemies arise in consequence of his just judgment against Genet."

Life of George Washington, Washington Irving, Vol. V, p. 233.

**The National Government Removes to Germantown on Account
of Yellow Fever**

Washington set out from Mount Vernon for Germantown on Monday, the 28th of October [1793], accompanied

by his secretary, Bartholomew Dandridge, his coachman, Lewis Lut, and servant, Austin, with five horses. At Baltimore they were overtaken by Thomas Jefferson, who had left Monticello on the 25th. . . . They reached Germantown in time for dinner on Friday, November 1st. This was a cold, rainy day, and Jefferson says they experienced the extremes of heat, cold, dust and rain on the journey. . . .

. . . The President, accompanied by Mr. Dandridge and his servants, set out on the 11th of November for Lancaster and Reading, going first into Philadelphia. He apparently was not satisfied that Congress could be accommodated in Germantown, or at least wished to see for himself what the other Pennsylvania towns had to offer, in case the members declined to meet in Philadelphia. . . .

Washington returned to Germantown on Saturday, the 16th, having been gone all the week. Before leaving he had written a personal note to Colonel Isaac Franks, asking for the use of his house. . . . It reached Colonel Franks, who had sought refuge from the yellow fever, at Bethlehem, Pa., on November 16th, and he immediately responded by hiring a light two-horse wagon, with a driver, and setting out for Germantown with Mrs. Franks, to put the house in order for the President's occupancy.

The Frank's house, or the Morris House, as it is known to-day, remains as it was when Washington occupied it, an interesting and as fine an example of the Colonial period as is to be found anywhere in America. . . .

Washington occupied it until the end of the month, making, however, frequent daily visits into the city, and so well did it suit him that he again occupied it the following summer. . . .

The gathering of the loose ends of business, sundered by the *hiatus* of the yellow fever, the preparation of the President's speech and message, before the assembly of Congress [in Germantown Academy] the first Monday of December, made the month of November, passed in Ger-

mantown, as busy and as important as any in Washington's administration.

In the early days, during Washington's and Adams' administrations, it was customary for the President to appear in person at the opening of Congress before both houses assembled in one body, and read an address to them, designated as the speech, and later the matters to be more specifically communicated were forwarded as messages. Washington's draft of the various subjects which should be included either in the speech or in later messages to Congress is here given:

(Sundry matters to be communicated for the information of Congress either in the speech at the opening of the session or by Messages thereafter as shall be thought best.)

"Proclamation informing the United States of the actual state of things as they stood between them and the powers at war.

"State of our application respecting the surrender of the Western posts.

"Additional instructions of his Britannic Majesty relative to corn, &c., in neutral vessels.

"State of matters as it respects our negotiations with Spain—relative to territory and the navigation of the river Mississippi.

"Correspondence with Mr. Genet, minister from the French republic.

"The impediments which have taken place in the intended ransoms of our citizens, captives in Algiers, and treaty with the Barbary States.

"Treaty attempted with the Western Indians, and the result of it.

"March of the Army in consequence of it delayed by the suspension we were held in thereby.

"State of matters as they relate to the Creeks and Cherokees; and to the frontiers of Georgia and the South-western Territory.

"Would not trade on public ground with all the bordering tribes of Indians (if they can once be made sensible of their folly by the superiority of our arms) be an effectual mean of attaching them to us by the strongest of all ties, interest?

"The utility of establishing proper arsenals, unfolds itself more and more every day; and the propriety of a military academy for teaching the art of gunnery and engineering, can scarcely be doubted. A war at any time would evince the impropriety of such a neglect.

"Might it not be expedient to take off the tax upon the transportation of newspapers, &c.

"An act of the legislature, south-west of the Ohio, passed November 20th, 1792, deposited in the Secretary of States's office.

"As both Representatives and President are newly chosen, and it is their first meeting, may it not be a good occasion, and proper for the latter to express his sentiments of the honor conferred on him by his fellow citizens? The former is an augmented body. The times are critical, and much temper, and cool, deliberate reflection is necessary to maintain peace with dignity and safety to the United States,

"Appointments during the recess of Congress to be laid before the Senate."

Washington in Germantown, Charles Francis Jenkins, pp. 99 to 138

Washington's Wrath over the Ribaldry of the Press

Washington, already weary and impatient, under the incessant dissensions of his Cabinet, was stung by the suggestion that he might be held up as in conflict with Genet, and subjected, as he had been, to the ribaldry of the press. At this unlucky moment Knox blundered forth with a specimen of the scandalous libels already in circulation; a pasquinade lately printed, called the "Funeral of George Washington," wherein the President was represented as placed

upon a guillotine, a horrible parody on the late decapitation of the French King. "The President," writes Jefferson, "now burst forth into one of those transports of a passion beyond his control; inveighed against the personal abuse which had been bestowed upon him, and defied any man on earth to produce a single act of his since he had been in the government that had not been done on the purest motives.

"He had never repented but once the having slipped the moment of resigning his office, and that was every moment since. In the agony of his heart he declared that he had rather be in his grave than in his present situation; that he had rather be on his farm than to be made emperor of the world—and yet, said he, indignantly, they are charging me with wanting to be a king!

"All were silent during this burst of feeling—a pause ensued—it was difficult to resume the question. Washington, however, who had recovered his equanimity, put an end to the difficulty. There was no necessity, he said, for deciding the matter at present; the propositions agreed to, respecting the letter to Mr. Morris, might be put into a train of execution, and, perhaps, events would show whether the appeal would be necessary or not."

Life of George Washington, Washington Irving, Vol. V, p. 218.

"That Rascal Freneau"

The President was much inflamed; got into one of those passions when he cannot command himself; ran on much on the personal abuse which had been bestowed on him; defied any man on earth to produce one single act of his since he had been in the government, which was not done on the purest motives; that he had never repented but once the having slipped the moment of resigning his office, and that was every moment since; that *by God* he had rather be in his grave than in his present situation; that he had rather be on his farm than to be made *Emperor of the world*; and yet that they were charging him with wanting to be a

King. That that *rascal Freneau* sent him three of his papers every day, as if he thought he would become the distributor of his papers; that he could see in this, nothing but an impudent design to insult him: he ended in this high tone.

"*Anas*," *Works of Thomas Jefferson*, Vol. IX, p. 164.

"Ten Thousand People Threatened to Drag Washington out of His House"

Although Washington was twice unanimously elected to the presidency he had many bitter enemies. He was the most vilified and abused of all the Presidents of the United States, excepting Lincoln, perhaps, during the first years of his administration. Popular feeling was so strong in favor of French republicanism that many good men, including Jefferson, then Secretary of State, were greatly incensed against President Washington because he was unwilling to break the existing treaty of neutrality. He saw that the lowest element in Paris had given themselves over to the most unbridled lust for blood and power, and that they "bawled for liberty," their idea of freedom being only license to commit crimes in freedom's name.

John Adams, then Vice-President, wrote of the feeling against Washington at this soul-trying time:

"Ten thousand people in the streets of Philadelphia, day after day, threatened to drag Washington out of his house, and effect a revolution in the government, or compel it to declare in favor of the French Revolution and against England."

In spite of his great popularity there was nothing of bravado or defiance in Washington's attitude toward the people. John Adams once wrote of this:

"General Washington, one of the most attentive men in the world to the manner of doing things, owed a great proportion of his celebrity to this circumstance."

Washington, once speaking on this subject, expressed the following sentiment:

"I have found it of importance and highly expedient to yield to many points in fact, without seeming to have

done it, and this to avoid bringing on a too frequent discussion of matters which in a political view ought to be kept a little behind the curtain, and not to be made too much the subjects of disquisition. Time only can eradicate and overcome customs and prejudices of long standing—they must be got the better of by slow and gradual advances.”

On another occasion he added, “In a word, if a man cannot act in all respects as he would wish, he must do what appears best under the circumstances he is in. This I aim at, however short I may fall of the end.”

W. W.

The Jay Treaty a Benefit to the West

In such a welter of intrigue, of land speculation, and of more or less piratical aggression, there was imminent danger that the West would relapse into anarchy unless a firm government were established, and unless the boundaries with England and Spain were definitely established. As Washington's administration grew steadily in strength and in the confidence of the people the first condition was met. The necessary fixity of boundary was finally obtained by the treaties negotiated through John Jay with England, and through Thomas Pinckney with Spain.

Jay's treaty aroused a perfect torrent of wrath throughout the country, and nowhere more than in the West. A few of the coolest and most intelligent men approved it, and rugged old Humphrey Marshall, the Federalist senator from Kentucky, voted for its ratification; but the general feeling against him was intense. Even Blount, who by this time was pretty well disgusted with the way he had been treated by the central government, denounced it, and expressed his belief that Washington would have hard work in explaining his conduct in procuring its ratification. Yet the westerners were the very people who had no cause whatever to complain of the treaty. It was not an entirely satisfactory treaty; perhaps a man like Hamilton might have

procured rather better terms; but, taken as a whole, it worked an immense improvement upon the condition of things already existing. Washington's position was undoubtedly right. He would have preferred a better treaty, but he regarded the Jay treaty as very much better than none at all.

The Winning of the West, Theodore Roosevelt, Vol. IV, p. 194.

Noble Reply to Jefferson

In Bache's *Aurora* of June 9th, [1796] an anonymous article had appeared, disclosing queries propounded by Washington, in strict confidence, to members of the Cabinet in 1793, as to the conduct to be observed in reference to England and France. As soon as Jefferson saw this article he wrote Washington, (June 19th) disclaiming his having had any concern in that breach of official trust. "I have formerly mentioned to you," observed he, "that from a very early period of my life, I had laid it down as a rule of conduct never to write a single word for the public papers. From this I have never departed in a single instance."

Jefferson further intimates a suspicion that a third party had been endeavoring to sow tares between him and Washington, by representing him (Jefferson) as still engaged in the bustle of politics, and in turbulence and intrigue against the government.

This drew forth a noble reply from Washington. "If I had entertained any suspicions before," writes he, "that the queries, which have been published in Bache's paper, proceeded from you, the assurances you have given me of the contrary, would have removed them; but the truth is, I harbored none."

Life of George Washington, Washington Irving, Vol. V, p. 305.

A Dinner at the Vice-President's at Richmond Hill

In the centre of the table sat Vice-President Adams, in full dress, with bag and solitaire, his hair frizzed out on each side of his head as you see it in Stuart's old picture of him. On his right sat Baron Steuben, our royalist

republican disciplinarian general. On his left was Mr. Jefferson, who had just returned from France, conspicuous in his red waistcoat and breeches, the fashion of Versailles. Opposite sat Mrs. Adams with her cheerful, intelligent face. She was placed between the courtly Count de Moustier, the French ambassador, in his red-heeled shoes and ear rings, and the grave, polite, and formally bowing Mr. Van Berkel, the learned and able envoy from Holland. Here too was Chancellor Livingston, then still in the prime of life, so deaf as to make conversation with him difficult, yet so overflowing with wit, eloquence, and information that while listening to him the difficulty was forgotten. The rest were members of Congress and of our Legislature, some of them no inconsiderable men.

Being able to talk French, a rare accomplishment in America at that time, a place was assigned to me next the count. De Moustier, after taking a little soup, kept an empty plate before him, took now and then a crumb of bread into his mouth, and declined all the luxuries of the table that were pressed upon him, from the roast beef to the lobsters. We were all in perplexity to know how the count would dine, when at length his own body-cook, in a clean white linen cap, a clean *tablier*, and a brilliantly white *serviette* flung over his arm, and a warm pie of truffles and game in his hand, came bustling eagerly through the crowd of waiters and placed it before the count, who, reserving a moderate share, distributed the rest among his neighbors, of whom being one I can attest the truth of the story and the excellence of the *pâté*.

Reminiscences in *The Talisman*, in 1829, edited by "Francis Herbert".

How the President Would Encourage Robert Fulton

"PHILADELPHIA 14th December, 1796.

"*To Tobias Lear:*

"A treatise on the improvement of canal navigation, came to my hands by Doctr Edwards as a present from the

Author, a few days ago.—As I shall have no time to look into it while I remain in this City, I make a deposit of it with you, until I return to Mount Vernon.—According to Doctr Edwards account, Fulton's system is putting *Lock Navigation* out of vogue.—I have not read a page in the Book,—but if the Potomack Company can extract any thing useful from it I shall feel happy in having sent it to you."

[G. WASHINGTON.]

Catalogue of the Washington Collection in the Boston Athenæum, p. 544.

"You Are Just a Man!"

Awhile since, in looking over a Philadelphia Directory for 1797 my heart gave a great bound as I came upon this entry:

"Washington, George, 190 High Street."

To the disgrace of Philadelphia, that house, second only in historic interest to Independence Hall, was many years ago demolished.

But, for a few charmed hours of a midsummer evening, some twenty years ago, that mansion stood again for me, and Washington walked again before my eyes, "in his habit as he lived;" and yet the only magic conjuration was the clear memory of a gracious old man, who, in his early childhood, was a neighbor of Washington, his parents living on Sixth street, near High street.

At the house of a friend in Philadelphia, Gen. Hector Tyndal, I was so fortunate as to meet this Mr. Robert E. Gray, a man past fourscore, but wonderfully well preserved—looking much younger than his years—a gentleman of the old school in courteousness of manner and neatness of dress, tall and stately, and with a fresh and handsome countenance. . . .

When I first asked Mr. Gray for his recollections: . . .

"Was Washington the stately and formal person he has been represented?"

"Yes, he was a very dignified gentleman, with the most elegant manners—very nice in his dress, careful and punctual. I suppose he would be thought a little stiff nowadays."

"Did you ever hear him laugh heartily?"

"Why no, I think I never did."

"Was he always grave, as you remember him, or did he smile now and then?"

"Why, bless you, yes, he always smiled on children! He was particularly popular with small boys. When he went in state to Independence Hall, in his cream-colored chariot, drawn by six bays, and with postilions and outriders, and when he set out for and returned from Mount Vernon, we boys were on hand; he could always count us in, to huzza and wave our hats for him, and he used to touch his hats to us as politely as though we had been veteran soldiers on parade."

"Were you ever in his house as a child?"

"Oh, yes; after his great dinners he used to tell the steward to let in the little fellows, and we, the boys of the immediate neighborhood, who were never far off on such occasions, crowded about the table and made quick work of the remaining cakes, nuts, and raisins."

"Washington had a habit of pacing up and down the large room on the first floor, in the early twilight, with his hands behind him; and one evening a little boy, who had never seen him, in attempting to climb up to an open window to look in upon him, fell and hurt himself. Washington heard him cry, rang for a servant, and sent him to inquire about the accident—for, after all, he was very soft-hearted, at least toward children. The servant came back and said:

"'The boy was trying to get a look at you, sir.'

"'Bring him in,' said the General, and, when the boy came in, he patted him on the head and said:

"'You wanted to see General Washington, did you? Well, I am General Washington.'

"But the little fellow shook his head and said:

“‘No, you are only just a man, I want to see the President.’

“They say Washington laughed, and told the boy that he was the President, and a *man* for all that. Then he had the servant give the little fellow some nuts and cakes and dismissed him.”

Stories and Sketches, Grace Greenwood, p. 11.

Publishing the Farewell Address

The period for the presidential election was drawing near, and great anxiety began to be felt that Washington would consent to stand for a third term. No one, it was agreed, had greater claim to the enjoyment of retirement, in consideration of public services rendered; but it was thought the affairs of the country would be in a very precarious condition should he retire before the wars of Europe were brought to a close.

Washington, however, had made up his mind irrevocably on the subject, and resolved to announce, in a farewell address, his intention of retiring.

The publication of the address produced a great sensation. Several of the State Legislatures ordered it to be put on their journals, “The President’s declining to be again elected,” writes the elder Wolcott, “constitutes a most important epoch in our national affairs.”

The address acted as a notice, to hush the acrimonious abuse of him which the opposition was pouring forth under the idea that he would be a candidate for a renomination. “It will serve as a signal, like the dropping of a hat, for the party races to start,” writes Fisher Ames, “and I expect a great deal of noise, whipping and spurring.”

Congress formed a quorum on the fifth day of December, the first day of the session which succeeded the publication of the Farewell Address. On the 7th, Washington met the two Houses of Congress for the last time. In his speech he recommended an institution for the improve-

ment of agriculture, a military academy, a national university, and a gradual increase of the navy.

"In pursuing this course, however, I cannot forget what is due to the character of our government and nation, or to a full and entire confidence in the good sense, patriotism, self-respect, and fortitude of my countrymen."

In concluding his address he observes: "The situation in which I now stand for the last time in the midst of the representatives of the people of the United States, naturally recalls the period when the administration of the present form of government commenced, and I cannot omit the occasion to congratulate you and my country on the success of the experiment, nor to repeat my fervent supplications to the Supreme Ruler of the universe and Sovereign Arbiter of nations, that his providential care may be still extended to the United States; that the virtue and happiness of the people may be preserved, and that the government which they have instituted for the protection of their liberties may be perpetual."

Life of George Washington, Washington Irving, Vol. V, p. 311

More Farewell Addresses

Both Houses made formal replies to the address. The Senate attributed much of the success of the government to the ability, firmness, and virtue of the President, and said: "The most effectual consolation that can offer for the loss we are about to sustain arises from the animating reflection that the influence of your example will extend to your succession, and the United States thus continue to enjoy an able, upright and energetic administration."

The House replied in a similar strain, expressing earnest admiration of the President's moderation, magnanimity, wisdom and firmness, and continued, "For our country's sake, and for the sake of republican liberty, it is our earnest wish that your example may be the guide of your successors,

and thus, after being the ornament and safeguard of the present age, become the patrimony of our descendants."

A Virginian named Giles made objection to the expressions of regret and admiration; Mr. Giles was a Franco-maniac. His motion to expunge these expressions received exactly twelve votes, one of which was cast by a young Tennessee member named Andrew Jackson, who could not avoid this splendid opportunity for blundering. Addresses similar to those of Congress began to arrive in large quantities from State legislatures, city councils, etc., all of which were immensely consoling to a man who had previously found, like every other prominent man who ever lived, that enemies are generally a hundred times as noisy as friends.

His last torment in official life was a letter written by the French minister and given to the newspapers, denouncing the proclamation of neutrality as insidious. This letter was evidently written in the interest (though undoubtedly without the knowledge) of Jefferson, who was a candidate for the presidency, but it was unsuccessful, for Adams was elected to succeed Washington.

George Washington, John Habberton, p. 312

An Affecting Scene

On the 4th of March, 1797, Washington went to the inauguration of his successor as President of the United States. The Federal Government was sitting at Philadelphia at that time, and Congress held sessions in the courthouse on the corner of Sixth and Chestnut streets.

At the appointed hour Washington entered the hall followed by John Adams, who was to take the oath of office. When they were seated Washington arose and introduced Mr. Adams to the audience, and then proceeded to read in a firm clear voice his brief valedictory—not his great "Farewell Address," for that had already been published. A lady who sat on "the front bench," immediately in front of Washington, describes the scene in these words:

"There was a narrow passage from the door of entrance to the room. General Washington stopped at the end to let Mr. Adams pass to the chair. The latter always wore a suit of bright drab, with loose cuffs to his coat. General Washington's dress was a full suit of black. His military hat had the black cockade. There stood the 'Father of his Country' acknowledged by nations the first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen. No marshals with gold-colored scarfs attended him; there was no cheering, no noise; the most profound silence greeted him as if the great assembly desired to hear him breathe. Mr. Adams covered his face with both his hands; the sleeves of his coat and his hands were covered with tears. Every now and then there was a suppressed sob. I cannot describe Washington's appearance as I felt it—perfectly composed and self-possessed till the close of his address. Then when strong, nervous sobs broke loose, when tears covered the faces, then the great man was shaken. I never took my eyes from his face. Large drops came from his eyes. He looked as if his heart was with them, and would be to the end,"

Heroes Every Child Should Know, Edited by Hamilton Wright Mabie, p 274

"If There Ever Was a Period of Rejoicing, This Is the Moment!"

"Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation," was the pious ejaculation of a man who beheld a flood of happiness rushing upon mankind. If ever there was a time that would license the reiteration of the exclamation, that time is now arrived; for the man who is the source of all the misfortunes of our country, is this day reduced to a level with his fellow-citizens, and is no longer possessed of power to multiply evils upon the United States. If ever there was a period for rejoicing, this is the moment; every heart in unison with the freedom and happiness of the people, ought to beat high with exultation that the name of Washington, from this day, ceases to give a

currency to political iniquity, and to legalize corruption. A new era is now opening upon us, an era which promises much to the people; for public measures must now stand upon their own merits, and nefarious projects can no longer be supported by a name. When a retrospect is taken of Washington's administration for eight years, it is a subject of the greatest astonishment that a single individual should have cankered the principles of republicanism in an enlightened people, just emerging from the gulf of despotism, and should have carried his designs against the public liberty so far as to have put in jeopardy its very existence. Such, however, are the facts, and with these staring us in the face, this day ought to be a JUBILEE in the United States.

Aurora, (newspaper) Edited by Benjamin Franklin Bache, March 7, 1797.

CHAPTER XXXV

THE SAGE OF MOUNT VERNON

Only a Man after All

On reaching Mount Vernon, Washington was quickly reminded that he was only a man, for, his house being out of repairs, he was obliged to fill it with carpenters, plasterers, and painters. "I have scarcely a room to put a friend into, or to sit in myself, without the music of hammer or the odoriferous smell of paint." But, as there were no plumbers in those days, his repairs were completed without driving him into bankruptcy or the grave. Then he began to enjoy himself; he wrote to his late Secretary of the Treasury that "To make and sell a little flour annually, to repair houses fast going to ruin, to build for the security of my papers of a public nature, and to amuse myself in agricultural and rural pursuits, will constitute employment for the few years I have to remain on this terrestrial globe. If also I could now and then meet the friends I esteem, it would fill the measure and add zest to my enjoyment, but if this ever happens, it must be under my own vine and fig-tree, as I do not think it probable that I shall go beyond twenty miles from there."

George Washington, John Habberton, p. 314.

Neighbor, Business Man and Juryman

Dr. Edward Everett Hale made the statement, in lectures and conversations, that there is good authority for the belief that one reason for Washington's declining to allow his name to be used for a third election to the presidency was because he was by no means certain of carrying his own State, Virginia. While all the other



*From the Original by Gilbert Stuart
in the Museum of the Fine Arts, Boston*

MARTHA WASHINGTON

States would doubtless have elected him, he seemed to feel it keenly that he was "not without honor save in his own country."

This belief is corroborated, at least, by the fact that, even as late as September in the year 1796, John Adams was elected President he did not know, nor did Washington himself seem to know, whether he intended to accept a third term.

Also, on the same authority, Hannibal Hamlin, Vice-President during Lincoln's first term, used to relate that, in 1842, when Hamlin began his first term in Congress, there were Virginians still living at the national capital who knew Washington personally. The neighbors, after his retirement, used to consult him about common farm and business matters, and, notwithstanding the immortal services he had given his country, he even served as a member of the county jury.

W. W.

"Mr. Stuart Is Right"

Stuart, the portrait painter, once said to General Lee that Washington had a tremendous temper, but that he had it under wonderful control. While dining with the Washingtons, General Lee repeated the first part of Stuart's remark. Mrs. Washington flushed and said that Mr. Stuart took a great deal upon himself. Then General Lee said that Mr. Stuart had added that the President had his temper under wonderful control. Washington seemed to be thinking for a moment, and then he smiled and said, "Mr. Stuart is right."

Washington's Birthday, Edited by Robert Haven Schauffer, p. 242.

"A Great Deal of My Work Is Done while Others Sleep"

Washington's last days, like those that preceded them in the course of a long and well-spent life, were devoted to

constant and careful employment. His correspondence both at home and abroad was immense. Yet no letter was unanswered. One of the best-bred men of his time, Washington deemed it a grave offense against the rules of good manners and propriety to leave letters unanswered. He wrote with great facility and it would be a difficult matter to find another who had written so much, who had written so well. General Harry Lee once observed so him:

"We are amazed, sir, at the vast amount of work you get through." Washington answered, "Sir, I rise at four o'clock, and a great deal of my work is done while others sleep."

Heroes Every Child Should Know, Edited by Hamilton Wright Mabie, p. 277.

Washington and the Federal City

Although Washington never lived in the White House he did more than any other man toward making it what it is and what it stands for to-day.

But there was no national capital; even the President's official residence had to be rented. The people in the southern States, of course, objected to having a capital as far north as New York. Philadelphia was nearer the center of population, but the most influential men of the time lived in Virginia. Washington, "the Father of his Country"; Jefferson, "the writer of the Declaration of Independence"; Madison, "the Father of the Constitution"; and Monroe, originator of "the Monroe Doctrine," all lived in Virginia, within driving distance of one another. They were four of the first five Presidents of the United States, each of them for eight years, while John Adams, the only President from another State, served only one term of four years, so that, of the first thirty-six years after the establishment of the presidential office, thirty-two were filled by Virginians (after that three more Presidents, Harrison, Tyler and Taylor were Virginia-born); so Virginia was well named "the Mother of Presidents." It was

natural that Virginia, and the States farther south, were desirous of having the national capital located nearer the geographical center of the thirteen original States. On the other hand, Massachusetts, New York and the other States objected to the selection of a Virginia city for the capital of the whole nation. Therefore, the States of Virginia and Maryland each gave a little territory to make a tract ten miles square, which they called the District of Columbia. The location of this district, for "the Federal City," was left to Washington, and he chose the present site on the Potomac river, a few hours' drive from Mount Vernon, his beautiful home estate.

The Story of the White House, Wayne Whipple, p. 11.

"What Would You Have Been, Meesther Washington?"

He retired to his home at Mount Vernon where he had been allowed to stay but a few years out of the nearly fifty he had devoted to the service of his country. He had been loyal and true to the king as long as he could be without sacrificing sacred principles and his higher manhood. After a heroic life of toil, hardships, privations and dangers, he was an old man before his time, for he was only sixty-five when he went to take a well-earned rest at beautiful Mount Vernon. Yet he had but little rest, for he often drove over to superintend the building of the palace he was never to see occupied.

It is too easy, now, to think of Washington as having had everything in his favor. But the English were not his bitterest enemies. "A prophet is not without honor save in his own country"—and city. Many were incapable of appreciating his greatness. They were mentally near-sighted, and they were too near him. When you stand near a mountain, you see only a part of it and can't take in its true grandeur. There was an old Scotchman, Davie Burns, who lived in a little cottage between the hill on which they were erecting "the palace" and the Potomac,

where a wharf had been built to receive the sandstone brought there for it from Virginia and Maryland. Davie Burns made a great fuss and did his best to hinder and annoy the laborers, because the stone for the building had to be hauled across his land. As this did not interfere with Burns in any way, it was very unreasonable of him, since much of the land for the Federal City had been purchased from him. In fact, it was making him a rich man. Washington, one day, took occasion to remonstrate with him, reminding him that but for the building of the national capital on his land, he would have lived on to the end "nothing but a poor tobacco planter."

"Aye, mon!" retorted the little Scotchman in great wrath, "and what would *you* have been, Meesther Washington, if you hadn't married the Widow Custis, with all her niggers? You'd be nothing but a land surveyor to-day, and a mighty poor one at that!"

This must have been a new idea to Washington. Here was an old fellow without patriotism. Evidently he was grossly ignorant of everything George Washington had done to make this the greatest and best country in the history of the world. He was a too near neighbor. He couldn't see beyond the "niggers" of the "Widow Custis!" In a letter to a friend after this, Washington mentioned the little old Scotchman as "the obstinate Mr. Burns."

The Story of the White House, Wayne Whipple, p. 15.

"Ah, Lee, You Are a Funny Fellow!"

Colonel Harry Lee, too, who used to be a favorite guest at Mount Vernon, does not seem to have been much under the influence of that "reverential awe" which Washington is said to have inspired; if we may judge from the following anecdote. Washington one day at table mentioned his being in want of carriage horses, and asked Lee if he knew where he could get a pair.

"I have a fine pair, General," replied Lee, "but you cannot get them."

"Why not?"

"Because you will never pay more than half price for anything; and I must have full price for my horses."

This bantering reply set Mrs. Washington laughing, and her parrot, perched beside her, joined in the laugh. The General took this familiar assault upon his dignity in great good part.

"Ah, Lee, you are a funny fellow," said he—"see, that bird is laughing at you!"

Life of George Washington, Washington Irving, Vol. IV, p. 40.

"Dabs about in Every Hole and Corner"

His niece, Harriot, who lived in the Washington home from 1785 to 1796, was a great trial to him. "She has," he wrote, "no disposition to be careful of her clothes, which she dabs about in every hole and corner, and her best things always in use, so that she costs me enough."

One of the characteristics of a truly great man is his readiness to ask pardon. Once when Nelly Custis, Mrs. Washington's granddaughter, was severely reprimanded for walking alone by moonlight in the grounds of Mount Vernon, Washington tried to intercede for the girl.

"Perhaps she was not alone; I would say no more," he said.

"Sir," said Nelly Custis, "you have brought me up to speak the truth, and when I told grandmother that I was alone, I hoped that you would believe me."

"My child," said Washington, bowing in his courtly fashion, "I beg your pardon."

Washington's Birthday, Edited by Robert Haven Schauffler, p. 241.

Physical Proportions of Washington

In person Washington was unique. He looked like no one else. To a stature lofty and commanding he united a form of the manliest proportions, and a dignified, graceful,

and imposing carriage. In the prime of life he stood six feet two inches. From the period of the Revolution there was an evident bending in his frame so passing straight before, but the stoop came from the cares and toils of that arduous contest rather than from years. For his step was firm, his appearance noble and impressive long after the time when the physical properties of men are supposed to wane.

A majestic height was met by corresponding breadth and firmness. His whole person was so cast in nature's finest mould as to resemble an ancient statue, all of whose parts unite to the perfection of the whole. But with all its development of muscular power, Washington's form had no look of bulkiness, and so harmonious were its proportions that he did not appear so tall as his portraits have represented. He was rather spare than full during his whole life.

The strength of Washington's arm was shown on several occasions. He threw a stone from the bed of the stream to the top of the Natural Bridge, Virginia, and another stone across the Rappahannock at Fredericksburg. The stone was said to be a piece of slate about the size of a dollar with which he spanned the bold river, and it took the ground at least thirty yards on the other side. Many have since tried this feat, but none have cleared the water. . . .

Washington's powers were chiefly in his limbs. His frame was of equal breadth from the shoulders to the hips. His chest was not prominent but rather hollowed in the center. He never entirely recovered from a pulmonary affection from which he suffered in early life. His frame showed an extraordinary development of bone and muscle, his joints were large, as were his feet; and could a cast of his hand have been preserved, it would have been ascribed to a being of a fabulous age. Lafayette said, "I never saw any human being with a hand so large as the General's."

Heroes Every Child Should Know, Edited by Hamilton Wright Mabie, p. 280.

How He Was Dressed

The Washington family were subject to hereditary gout. The chief never experienced a pang. His temperance, and the energetic employment of both his body and mind, seemed to forbid the approach of a disease which severely afflicted several of his nearest kindred. His illnesses were of rare occurrence, but were particularly severe. His aversion to the use of medicine was extreme; and, even when in great suffering, it was only by the entreaties of his lady, and the respectful, yet beseeching look of his oldest friend and companion in arms (Dr. James Craik), that he could be prevailed upon to take the slightest preparation of medicine.

General Washington, during the whole of his public and private life, was a very early riser; indeed, in the maternal mansion, at which his first habits were formed, the character of a sluggard was abhorred. Whether as chief magistrate, or the retired citizen, we find this man of method and labor seated in his library from one to two hours before day, in winter, and at daybreak in summer. We wonder at the amazing amount of work which he performed. Nothing but a method the most remarkable and exemplary could have enabled him to accomplish such a world of labor, an amount which might have given pretty full employment to half a dozen ordinary and not idle men all their lives. When we consider the volume of his official papers—his vast foreign, public and private correspondence—we are scarcely able to believe that the space of one man's life could have comprehended the doing of many things and doing them so well.

His toilet was soon made. A single servant prepared his clothes, and laid them in readiness. He also combed and tied his hair. He shaved and dressed himself, but giving very little of his precious time to matters of that sort, though remarkable for the neatness and propriety of his apparel. His clothes were made after the old-fashioned cut of the best, though plainest materials.

What He Ate

The library and a visit to the stables occupied the morning until the hour of breakfast. This meal was without change to him, whose habits were regular, even to matters which others are so apt to indulge themselves in to an endless variety. Indian cakes, honey, and tea, formed this temperate repast. On rising from the table, if there were guests (and it was seldom otherwise), books and papers were offered for their amusement; they were requested to take good care of themselves, and the illustrious farmer proceeded to the daily tour of his agricultural concerns. He rode upon his farms entirely unattended, opening his gates, pulling down and putting up his fences, as he passed, visiting his laborers at their work, inspecting all the operations of his extensive agricultural establishments with a careful eye, directing useful improvements, and superintending them in their progress. He introduced many and valuable foreign as well as domestic modes of improved husbandry, showing, by experiment, their practical utility, and a peculiar adaptment to our system of rural affairs; and, by his zeal and ability, "gave a speed to the plow," and a generous impulse to the cause of agricultural and domestic economy—those important sources of national wealth, industry, and independence.

The tour of the farms might average from ten to fifteen miles per day. An anecdote occurs to us at this moment, which, as it embraces a Revolutionary worthy, a long-tried and valued friend of the chief, and is descriptive of Washington on his farm, we shall, without apology present it to our readers.

We were accosted while hunting by an elderly stranger, who inquired whether the General was to be found at the mansion house, or whether he had gone to visit his estate. We replied, that he was abroad, and gave directions as to the route the stranger was to pursue, observing at the

same time, "You will meet, sir, with an old gentleman riding alone, in plain drab clothes, a broad-brimmed white hat, a hickory switch in his hand, and carrying an umbrella with a long staff, which is attached to his saddlebow—that person, sir, is General Washington!"

Recollections of Washington, by His Adopted Son, George Washington Parke Custis, p. 166.

"Laughing until Tears Rolled down His Face"

When at home he amused himself by managing his estate; as the land under cultivation exceeded five square miles, and his stables and pastures contained several hundred horses and cattle, he could hardly have found time to tell stories at the village store, had there been such a place. With all the responsibilities of a farmer, however, he seemed to have none of the vices peculiar to that station of life; indeed, so different from the farmer of the present day was he, that instead of cutting down shade trees wherever he found them, he planted a great many; at Mount Vernon, more than anywhere else, men learned that the elm was not the only tree that could cast a shadow, and he set the fashion of planting the beautiful horse-chestnut by bringing many of the seeds with him on his return from a trip to what is now the "Buckeye state."

Much as he tried, however, to be a simple farmer and no better than his neighbors, he had still to suffer many of the miseries of greatness. Once he had been great; that was enough to make his mere presence overawe many people with whom he came in contact, so when he wanted to enjoy the spectacle of a merry company he frequently had to keep himself behind a door and peer through the crack. With those who knew him well and familiarly, he was not treated as an idol but was allowed to behave as a human being and be treated as one, and numerous letters and other records prove that in such circumstances he could be jolly good company. It was impossible for him

not to be thoughtful—not to be silent when he had anything to think about, but he was among the first to be affected by any merriment about him. There is a pleasant story about his frequently growing hilarious with old friends at Fredericksburg and laughing at comic songs. Miss Custis, the daughter of Washington's stepson, said, "I have sometimes made him laugh most heartily from sympathy with my joyous and extravagant spirits," and horrible as it may seem to some of his worshipers, there are several well authenticated reports of his laughing until tears rolled down his face.

George Washington, John Habberton, p. 259.

Advice in a Love Affair

"Men and women feel the same inclination toward each other now that they always have done, and which they will continue to do until there is a new order of things, and you, as others have done, may find that the passions of our sex are easier raised than allayed. Do not, therefore, boast too soon or too strongly of your insensibility.

Love is said to be an involuntary passion, and it is therefore contended that it cannot be resisted. This is true in part only, for, like all things else, when nourished and supplied plentifully with aliment, it is rapid in its progress, but let these be withdrawn and it may be stifled in its birth or much stunted in its growth.

Although we cannot avoid first impressions, we may assuredly place them under guard.

When the fire is beginning to kindle, and your heart growing warm, propound these questions to it: Who is this invader? Have I a competent knowledge of him? Is he a man of good character? A man of sense? (for be assured a sensible woman can never be happy with a fool). What has been his walk in life?

Is his fortune sufficient to maintain me in the manner I have been accustomed to live, and in which my sisters live? And is he one to whom my friends can have

no reasonable objection? If all these interrogatories can be satisfactorily answered, there will remain but one more to be asked; that, however, is an important one. Have I sufficient ground to conclude that his affections are engaged by me?"

George Washington, John Habberton, p. 317.

A Letter to Kosciuszko

"MOUNT VERNON, 15th. Octr. 1797.

"Dear Sir,

"Your favour dated Elizabeth Town October—has been duly received.—I am sorry that the state of your health should deprive me of the pleasure of your company at this place,—and I regret still more that the pain you feel from the wounds you have received though glorious for your reputation is the occasion of it.

"Whatever I can do as a private citizen (and in no other capacity I can now act) consistently, with the plan I have laid down for my future government, you may freely command.—You will find, however, contrary as it may be to your expectation or wishes, that all pecuniary matters must flow from the Legislature and in a form which cannot be dispensed with—I may add I am sure, that your claim upon the justice & feelings of this country will meet with no delay—Nor do I suppose that the loss of your certificate will be any impediment.—Your rank and services in the American Army are too well known to require that testimony of your claim and the Books of the Treasury will show that you have received nothing in discharge of it—or if any part, to what amount.—With the highest esteem & regard and respect.

"I am, Dear Sir

"Your Most Obedt. Hble. Servant "

"G. WASHINGTON."

"To General Tadeusz Kosciuszko.

Letters and Recollections of George Washington, Tobias Lear, p. 237.

“ Marriage the Most Interesting Event ”

However well Washington thought of “the honorable state,” he was no match-maker, and when asked to give advice to the widow of Jack Custis, replied, “I never did, nor do I believe I ever shall, give advice to a woman, who is setting out on a matrimonial voyage; first, because I never could advise one to marry without her own consent; and, secondly, because I know it is to no purpose to advise her to refrain, when she has obtained it. A woman very rarely asks an opinion or requires advice on such an occasion, till her resolution is formed; and then it is with the hope and expectation of obtaining a sanction, not that she means to be governed by your disapprobation, that she applies. In a word the plain English of the application may be summed up in these words: ‘I wish you to think as I do; but, if unhappily you differ from me in opinion, my heart, I must confess, is fixed and I have gone too far now to retract.’”

Again he wrote:

“It has ever been a maxim with me through life, neither to promote nor prevent a matrimonial connection, unless there should be something indispensably requiring interference in the latter. I have always considered marriage as the most interesting event of one’s life, the foundation of happiness or misery. To be instrumental therefore in bringing two people together, who are indifferent to each other, and may soon become objects of disgust; or to prevent a union, which is prompted by the affections of the mind, is what I never could reconcile with reason, and therefore neither directly nor indirectly have I ever said a word to Fanny or George, upon the subject of their intended connection.”

The question whether Washington was a faithful husband might well be left to the facts already given, were it not that stories of his immorality are bandied about in

clubs, a well-known clergyman has vouched for their truth, and a United States senator has given further currency to them by claiming special knowledge on the subject. Since such are the facts, it seems best to consider the question and show what evidence there actually is for these stories, that at least the pretended "letters," etc., which are always being cited, and are never produced, may no longer have credence put in them, and the true basis for all the stories may be known and valued at its worth.

The True George Washington, Paul Leicester Ford, p. 104.

"I May Be Looking in Doomsday Book"

"I have nothing to say that could either inform or amuse a Secretary of War at Philadelphia. I might tell him that I begin my diurnal course with the sun, that if my hirelings are not in their places at that time, I send them messages of sorrow for their indisposition, that having put these wheels in motion, I examine the state of things further; that the more they are probed the deeper I find the wounds that my buildings have sustained by an absence and neglect of eight years; that by the time I have accomplished these matters breakfast is ready; that this being over, I mount my horse and ride round my farm, which employs me until it is time to dress for dinner, at which I rarely miss seeing strange faces, come, they say, out of respect to me. Pray, would not the word curiosity answer as well? How different this from having a few friends at a cheerful board!

"The usual time of sitting at table, talk, and tea bring me within the dawn of candlelight, previous to which, if not prevented by company, I resolve that as soon as the glimmering taper supplies the place of the great luminary I will retire to my writing-table and acknowledge the letters I have received, but when the lights are brought, I feel tired and disinclined to engage in this work, conceiving that the next night will do as well. The next night comes, and with it the same cause for postponement and so on.

Having given you the history of a day, it will serve for a year, and I am persuaded you will not require a second edition of it. But it may strike you that in this detail no mention is made of any portion of time allotted for reading. The remark would be just, for I have not looked into a book since I came home, nor shall I be able to do it until I have discharged my workmen—probably not before the nights grow longer, when possibly I may be looking in *Doomsdav Book*."

George Washington, John Habberton, p. 315.

Washington as a Joker

Washington was something of a joker himself in his kindly, ponderous way. Once he wrote:

"Without a coinage, or unless a stop can be put to the cutting and clipping of money, our dollars, pistareens, etc., will be converted, as Teague says, into *five quarters!*"

While the Federalists were being accused of stealing from the public treasury, Washington wrote facetiously to a member of the Cabinet:

"And pray, my good sir, what part of the \$800,000 have come to your share? As you are high in office, I hope you did not disgrace yourself in the acceptance of a paltry bribe —\$100,000 perhaps!"

After a certain poetess had sent him some verses which praised him in a somewhat fulsome manner, he wrote to thank her, and ended his letter with this labored humor:

"Fiction is sure to be the very life and soul of poetry. All poets and poetesses have been indulged in the free and indisputable use of it, time out of mind. And to oblige you to make such an excellent poem on such a subject without any materials but those of simple reality would be as cruel as the edict of Pharaoh which compelled the children of Israel to manufacture bricks without the necessary ingredients."

Washington even joked about his own death. In writing out a letter for his wife to copy he continued:

"I am now by desire of the General to add a few words on his behalf; which he desires may be expressed in the terms following, that is to say—that despairing of hearing what may be said of him, if he should really go off in an apoplectic, or any other fit (for he thinks all fits that issue in death are worse than a love fit, a fit of laughter, and many other kinds that he could name)—he is glad to hear *beforehand* what will be said of him on that occasion; conceiving that nothing extra will happen between *this* and *then* to make a change in his character for better, or for worse. And besides, as he has entered into an engagement . . . not to quit *this* world before the year 1800, it may be *relied upon* that no breach of contract shall be laid to him on that account, unless dire necessity should bring it about, maugre all his exertions to the contrary. In that case, he shall hope they would do by him as he would do by them—excuse it. At present there seems to be no danger of his thus giving them the slip, as neither his health nor his spirits were ever in greater flow, notwithstanding he adds, he is descending, and has almost reached the bottom of the hill; or in other words, the shades below. For your particular good wishes on this occasion he charges me to say that he feels highly obliged, and that he reciprocates them with great cordiality."

W. W.

**"What Has Not Been Done within the Last Twenty
Years by Us"**

"Dear Sir,

"I am alone at *present*, and shall be glad to see you this evening.

"Unless some one pops in, unexpectedly—Mrs. Washington & myself will do what I believe has not been done

within the last twenty Years by us,—that is to set down to dinner by ourselves. I am

“Your Affectionate”

[Mr. Tobias Lear.]

[G. WASHINGTON.]

Letters and Recollections of George Washington, Tobias Lear, p. 120.

“I Should Not Intrench Myself under Cover of Age”

(Letter to John Adams, President of the United States.)

“Mount Vernon, 4 July, 1798.

“Dear Sir,

“Not being in the habit, since my return to private life, of sending regularly to the post-office, (nine miles from hence) every post-day, it often happens that letters addressed to me lie longer there on that account, than they otherwise would do.

“I have delayed no time unnecessarily since I had the honor of receiving your obliging favor of the 22d ultimo, to thank you for the polite and flattering sentiments you have been pleased to express relatively to me, and to assure you, that, as far as it is in my power to support your administration, and to render it easy, happy, and honorable, you may command me without reserve.

“At the epoch of my retirement, an Invasion of these States by an European Power, or even the probability of such an event happening *in my days*, was so far from being contemplated by me, that I had no conception that that or any other occurrence would arise in so short a period, which could turn my eyes from the shades of Mount Vernon. But this seems to be the age of wonders; and reserved for intoxicated and lawless France (for purposes of Providence far beyond the reach of human ken) to slaughter its own citizens, and to disturb the repose of all the world besides.

“From a view of the past, from the prospect present—and of that which seems to be expected, it is not easy for me to decide satisfactorily on the part it might best become me to

act. In case of *actual Invasion* by a formidable force, I should certainly not Intrench myself under cover of age and retirement, if my services should be required by my Country to assist in repelling it.

“The difficulty in which you expect to be involved, in the choice of general officers, when you come to form the army, is certainly a serious one; and, in a government like ours, where there are so many considerations to be attended to and to combine, it will be found not a little perplexing. But, as the mode of carrying on the War against the Foe that threatens must differ widely from that practised in the contest for Independence, it will not be an easy matter, I conceive, to find, among the *old set* of Generals, men of sufficient activity, energy, and health, and of sound politics, to train troops to the “quick step,” long marches, and severe conflicts they may have to encounter; and, therefore, that recourse must be had, (for the greater part at least) to the well-known, most experienced, best proved and intelligent officers of the late army without respect to Grade.

“I speak with diffidence, however, on this head, having no list by me with which my memory could be refreshed. There is one thing though, on which I can give a decided opinion; and, as it is of the utmost importance to the Public, to the Army, and to the officer commanding it, be him who he will, I will take the liberty of suggesting it *now*. It is that the greatest circumspection be used in appointing the general staff. If this corps is not composed of respectable characters, with knowledge of the duties of their respective Departments, able, active, and firm, and of incorruptible integrity and prudence, and withal such as the Commander-in-Chief can place entire confidence in, his plans and movements, if not defeated altogether, may be so embarrassed and retarded, as to amount nearly to the same thing; and this is almost with impunity on their part.

“The opening given me in your letter is such, as hath prompted me to express these sentiments with freedom; and

persuading myself, that you will ascribe them to pure motives although they may differ from your own ideas, I have no doubt of their being well received. With the greatest respect and consideration I have the honor to be, dear Sir," &c.,

[G. WASHINGTON.]

Writings of Washington Edited by Lawrence B. Evans, Ph.D., p. 428.

Preparing for War with France

Early in November (1798) Washington left his retirement and repaired to Philadelphia, at the earnest request of the secretary of war, to meet that public functionary and Major-generals Hamilton and Pinckney, and make arrangements respecting the forces about to be raised. The secretary had prepared a series of questions for their consideration, and others were suggested by Washington, all bearing on the organization of the provisional army. Upon these Washington and the two major-generals were closely engaged for nearly five weeks, at great inconvenience and in a most inclement season. The result of their deliberations was reduced to form, and communicated to the secretary in two letters drafted by Hamilton, and signed by the commander-in-chief. Not the least irksome of Washington's task, in his present position, was to wade through volumes of applications and recommendations for military appointments; a task which he performed with extreme assiduity, anxious to avoid the influence of favor or prejudice, and sensitively alive to the evil of improper selections.

As it was a part of the plan on which he had accepted the command of the army to decline the occupations of the office until circumstances should demand his presence in the field; and as the season and weather rendered him impatient to leave Philadelphia, he gave the secretary of war his views and plans for the charge and direction of military affairs, and then set out once more for Mount Vernon. The cares and concerns of office, however, followed

him to his retreat. "It is not the time nor the attention only," writes he, "which the public duties I am engaged in require, but their bringing me applicants, recommenders of applicants, and seekers of information, none of whom, perhaps, are my acquaintances, with their servants and horses to aid in the consumption of my forage, and what to me is more valuable, my time, that I most regard; for a man in the country, nine miles from any house of entertainment, is differently situated from one in a city, where none of these inconveniences are felt."

Life of George Washington, Washington Irving, Vol. V, p. 282.

"A Very Complete Tumble"

Up to his sixty-eighth year he mounted a horse with surprising agility and rode with ease and grace. Rickets, the celebrated equestrian, used to say, "I delight to see the General ride, and make it a point to fall in with him when I hear he is out on horseback—his seat is so firm, his management so easy and graceful that I who am an instructor in horsemanship would go to him and learn to ride."

In his later days, the General, desirous of riding pleasantly, procured from the North two horses of a breed for bearing the saddle. They were well to look at, and pleasantly gaited under the saddle, but also scary, and therefore unfitted for the service of one who liked to ride quietly on his farm, occasionally dismounting and walking in his fields to inspect improvements. From one of these horses the General sustained a fall—probably the only fall he ever had from a horse in his life. It was upon a November evening, and he was returning from Alexandria to Mount Vernon with three friends and a groom. Having halted a few moments he dismounted, and upon rising in his stirrup again, the horse, alarmed at the glare from a fire near the road-side, sprang from under his rider who came heavily to the ground. His friends rushed to give him assistance, thinking him hurt. But the vigorous old man was upon his feet again, brushing

the dust from his clothes, and after thanking those who came to his aid, said that he had had a very complete tumble and that it was owing to a cause no horseman could well avoid or well control—that he was only poised in his stirrups and had not yet gained his saddle when the scary animal sprang from under him.

Heroes Every Child Should Know, Edited by Hamilton Wright Mabie, p. 282.

“ The Recollection of Those Happy Moments ”

But the friend most missed of all was the one who in boyhood had slept under the same blanket side by side with him by light of stars or before wigwam fire in the Shenandoah wilderness—George William Fairfax, whose father had been as a father to him, who had married Sally Cary, the lady of Washington's first love, the true “lowland beauty” of his boyish sighs. Fairfax, a loyalist in sympathy, had gone with his wife, before the actual clash of arms, to England, where, taking possession of an estate in Yorkshire coming to him by inheritance, he had resided until his death, in 1787. Washington's deep regret at the severance of their families tinges many of his letters at the time. Belvoir House—the old mansion, built by the sturdy colonel, who, except his uncle's son, the lord of Greenway Court, was the only Fairfax to settle in America in whose veins ran the blood of the hero of Marston Moor, and at whose lips Washington had learned his first lesson of how a soldier may serve his country—had been destroyed by fire in 1783, after the departure of its owners to live in England. Its melancholy ruin faced the master of Mount Vernon whenever he looked from his river portico southward across Dogue creek, which like a glistening ribbon ran between. In a letter written in the last year of his life to his old love, Sarah Fairfax, then at Bath in England, Washington dwells upon the principal circumstances of the twenty-five years of his career, since their parting, and ends with these words:

"None of these events nor all of them put together, have been able to eradicate from my mind the recollection of those happy moments, the happiest of my life, which I have enjoyed in your company at Belvoir."

Washington at Mount Vernon, after the Revolution, Constance Cary Harrison, The Century Magazine, New Series, Vol. XV, April, 1889, p. 836.

Events of the Last Ten Years of the Eighteenth Century

Establishment of the United States Bank..... 1791

Establishment of the United States Mint..... 1792

First division into political parties..... 1792

Washington laid the corner-stone of the White House,
October 13, 1792

Cotton-gin invented by Eli Whitney..... 1793

Washington's second inauguration..... March 4, 1793

The Whiskey Rebellion in Pennsylvania..... 1794

The Jay Treaty with Great Britain..... 1795

John Adams inaugurated President, Philadelphia.. 1797

War with France begun..... 1798

Peace with France..... 1799

Death of Washington..... December 14, 1799

City of Washington becomes the national capital.. 1800

CHAPTER XXXVI

“FIRST IN THE HEARTS OF HIS COUNTRYMEN”

Washington's Secretary's Account of the General's Last Illness

(A true copy, made at Mrs. Lear's request, from the diary of Col. Lear.)

Saturday, Decr. 14th, 1799.

This day being marked by an event which will be memorable in the History of America, and perhaps of the World, I shall give a particular statement of it, to which I was an eye witness—

The last illness and death of General Washington

On Thursday Decr. 12th. the General rode out to his farms about ten o'clock, and did not return home till past three. Soon after he went out the weather became very bad, rain, hail, and snow falling alternately with a cold wind. When he came in, I carried some letters to him to frank, intending to send them to the Post-Office in the evening. He franked the letters; but said the Weather was too bad to send a servant to the office that evening. I observed to him that I was afraid he had got wet; he said no, his great Coat had kept him dry; but his neck appeared to be wet, and the snow was hanging upon his hair. He came to dinner (which had been Waiting for him) without changing his dress. In the evening he appeared as well as usual.

A heavy fall of snow took place on Friday (which prevented the General from riding out as usual). He had taken cold (undoubtedly from being so much exposed the day before) and complained of a sore throat: he however

went out in the afternoon into the ground between the House and the River to mark some trees which were to be cut down in the improvements of that spot. He had a Hoarseness which increased in the evening; but he made light of it. In the evening the Papers were brought from the Post Office, and he sat in the Parlour, with Mrs. Washington & myself reading them till about nine o'clock —when Mrs. W. went up into Mrs. Lewis's room, who was confined in Child Bed, and left the General & myself reading the papers. He was very cheerful and when he met with anything interesting or entertaining, he wd. read it aloud as well as his hoarseness would permit him. He requested me to read to him the debates of the Virginia Assembly on the election of a Senator and a Governor;—and on hearing Mr. Madison's observations respecting Mr. Monroe, he appeared much affected and spoke with some degree of asperity on the subject, which I endeavoured to moderate, as I always did on such occasions. On his retiring I observed to him that he had better take something to remove his cold. He answered no; "you know I never take anything for a cold. Let it go as it came".

Letters and Recollections of George Washington, Tobias Lear, p. 129.

Bled by an Overseer

Between two & three o'clock on Saturday morning, he awoke Mrs. Washington, and told her he was very unwell, and had had an ague. She observed that he could scarcely speak and breathed with difficulty; and would have got up to call a Servant; but he would not permit her lest she should take cold. As soon as the day appeared, the Woman (Caroline) went into the Room to make a fire, and Mrs. Washington sent her immediately to call me. I got up, put on my clothes as quickly as possible, and went to his Chamber. Mrs. Washington was then up, and related to me his being taken ill as before stated. I found the General breathing with difficulty, and hardly able to utter a word intelli-

gibly. He desired that Mr. Rawlins (one of the overseers) might be sent for to bleed him before the Dr. could arrive. I dispatched a servant instantly for Rawlins, and another for Dr. Craik, and returned again to the General's Chamber, where I found him in the situation as I had left him. A mixture of Molasses, Vinegar & butter was prepared to try its effects in the throat; but he could not swallow a drop. Whenever he attempted it he appeared to be distressed, convulsed and almost suffocated. Rawlins came in soon after sun rise, and prepared to bleed him. When the arm was ready the General observing that Rawlins appeared to be agitated, said, as well as he could speak "*Don't be afraid.*" And after the incision was made, he observed, "*The orifice is not large enough.*" However the blood ran pretty freely. Mrs. Washington not knowing whether bleeding was proper or not in the General's situation, begged that much might not be taken from him, lest it should be injurious, and desired me to stop it; but when I was about to untie the string the General put up his hand to prevent it, and as soon as he could speak, said—"More, more." Mrs. Washington still being very uneasy lest too much blood should be taken, it was stopped after taking about half a pint. Finding that no relief was obtained from bleeding, and that nothing would go down the throat, I proposed bathing it externally with salvolatila, which was done; and in the operation, which was with the hand, and in the gentlest manner, he observed "*'tis very sore.*" A piece of flannel dipped in salvolatila was put around his neck, and his feet bathed in warm water; but without affording any relief.

Letters and Recollections of George Washington, Tobias Lear, p. 130.

Bled and Dosed by Three Doctors

In the meantime, before Dr. Craik arrived Mrs. Washington desired me to send for Dr. Brown of Post Tobacco, whom Dr. Craik had recommended to be called, if any case should occur that was seriously alarming. I dispatched a

messenger (Cyrus) immediately for Dr. Brown (between 8 & 9 o'clock). Dr. Craik came in soon after, and upon examining the General, he put a blister of Cantharides on the throat, took some more blood from him, and had a gargle of Vinegar & sage tea, and ordered some Vinegar and hot water for him to inhale the steam which he did;—but in attempting to use the gargle he was almost suffocated. When the gargle came from his throat some phlegm followed it, and he attempted to Cough, which the Doctor encouraged him to do as much as possible; but he could only attempt it. About eleven o'clock Dr. Craik requested that Dr. Dick might be sent for, as he feared Dr. Brown might not come in time. A messenger was accordingly dispatched for him. About this time the General was bled again. No effect however was produced by it, and remained in the same state, unable to swallow anything. A blister was administered about 12 o'clock, which produced an evacuation; but caused no alteration in his complaint.

Dr. Dick came in about 3 o'clock, and Dr. Brown arrived soon after. Upon Dr. Dick's seeing the General and consulting a few minutes with Dr. Craik he was bled again; the blood came very slow, was thick, and did not produce any symptoms of fainting. Dr. Brown came into the chamber soon after; and upon feeling the General's pulse &c. the Physicians went out together. Dr. Craik returned soon after. The General could now swallow a little. Calomel & tarter em. were administered, but without any effect.

Letters and Recollections of George Washington, Tobias Lear, p. 131

His Last Will and Other Papers

About half past 4 o'clock he desired me to call Mrs. Washington to his bed side, when he requested her to go down into his room, and take from his desk two Wills which she would find there, and bring them to him, which she did. Upon looking at them he gave her one, which he observed was useless, as being superseded by the other, and

desired her to burn it, which she did, and took the other and put it into her Closet.

After this was done, I returned to his bed side, and took his hand. He said to me, "*I find I am going, my breath can not last long. I believed from the first that the disorder would prove fatal. Do you arrange and record all my late military letters and papers. Arrange my accounts and settle my books, as you know more about them than anyone else, and let Mr. Rawlins finish recording my other letters which he has begun*". I told him this should be done. He then asked if I recollected anything which it was essential for him to do, as he had but a very short time to continue among us. I told him I could recollect nothing; but that I hoped he was not so near his end; he observed smiling, that he certainly was, and that as it was the debt that all must pay, he looked to the event with perfect resignation.

In the course of the afternoon he appeared to be in great pain and distress, from the difficulty of breathing, and frequently changed his position on the bed. On these occasions I lay upon the bed, and endeavoured to raise him, and turn him with as much care as possible. He appeared penetrated with gratitude for my attentions, & often said, "*I am afraid I shall fatigue you too much,*" and upon assuring him that I could feel nothing but a wish to give him ease, he replied, "*Well it is a debt we must pay to each other, and I hope when you want aid of this kind you will find it.*"

He asked when Mr. Lewis & Washington Custis would return, (they were in New Kent) I told him about the 20th of the month.

About 5 o'clock Dr. Craik came again into the room & upon going to the bed side the Genl. said to him, "*Doctor I die hard; but I am not afraid to go; I believed from my first attack that I should not survive it; my breath can not last long.*"

The Doctor pressed his hand, but could not utter a word. He retired from the bed side, & sat by the fire absorbed in grief.

Further Details Not in Lear's Diary

The General's servant *Christopher* was in the room through the day; and in the afternoon the General directed him to sit down, as he had been standing almost the whole day; he did so.

About 8 o'clock in the morning he expressed a desire to get up. His clothes were put on and he was led to a chair by the fire. He found no relief from this position, and lay down again about 10 o'clk. About 5 P. M. he was helped up again & after sitting about half an hour desired to be undressed & put in bed; which was done.

During his whole illness he spoke but seldom, and with great difficulty; and in so low & broken a voice as at times hardly to be understood. His patience, fortitude, & resignation never forsook him for a moment. In all his distress he uttered not a sigh, nor a complaint; always endeavouring (from a sense of duty as it appeared) to take what was offered him, and to do as he was desired by the Physicians.

Letters and Recollections of George Washington Tobias Lear, p. 135.

His Last Words

Between 5 & 6 o'clock Dr. Dick & Dr. Brown came into the room, and with Dr. Craik went to the bed; when Dr. Craik asked him if he could sit up in the bed? He held out his hand & I raised him up. He then said to the Physicians,

"I feel myself going, I thank your for your attentions; but I pray you to take no more trouble about me, let me go off quietly, I cannot last long."

They found that all which had been done was without effect; he laid down again and all retired except Dr. Craik. He continued in the same situation, uneasy & restless, but without complaining; frequently asking what hour it was. When I helped him to move at this time he did not speak, but looked at me with strong expressions of gratitude.

About 8 o'clock the Physicians came again into the room

and applied blisters and cataplasms of wheat and bran to his legs and feet; after which they went out (except Dr. Craik) without a ray of hope. I went out about this time and wrote a line to Mr. Law & Mr. Peter, requesting them to come with their wives (Mrs. Washington's Granddaughters) as soon as possible to Mount Vernon.

About ten o'clk he made several attempts to speak to me before he could effect it, at length he said—

"I am just going. Have me decently buried; and do not let my body be put into the Vault in less than three days after I am dead."

I bowed assent, for I could not speak. He then looked at me again and said,

"Do you understand me?"

I replied "Yes."

"Tis well," said he.

About ten minutes before he expired (which was between ten & eleven o'clk.) his breathing became easier; he lay quietly;—he withdrew his hand from mine, and felt his own pulse. I saw his countenance change. I spoke to Dr. Craik who sat by the fire; he came to the bed side. The General's hand fell from his wrist—I took it in mine and put it into my bosom. Dr. Craik put his hands over his eyes and he expired without a struggle or a sigh.

While we were fixed in silent grief, Mrs. Washington (who was sitting at the foot of the bed) asked with a firm & collected voice,

"Is he gone?"

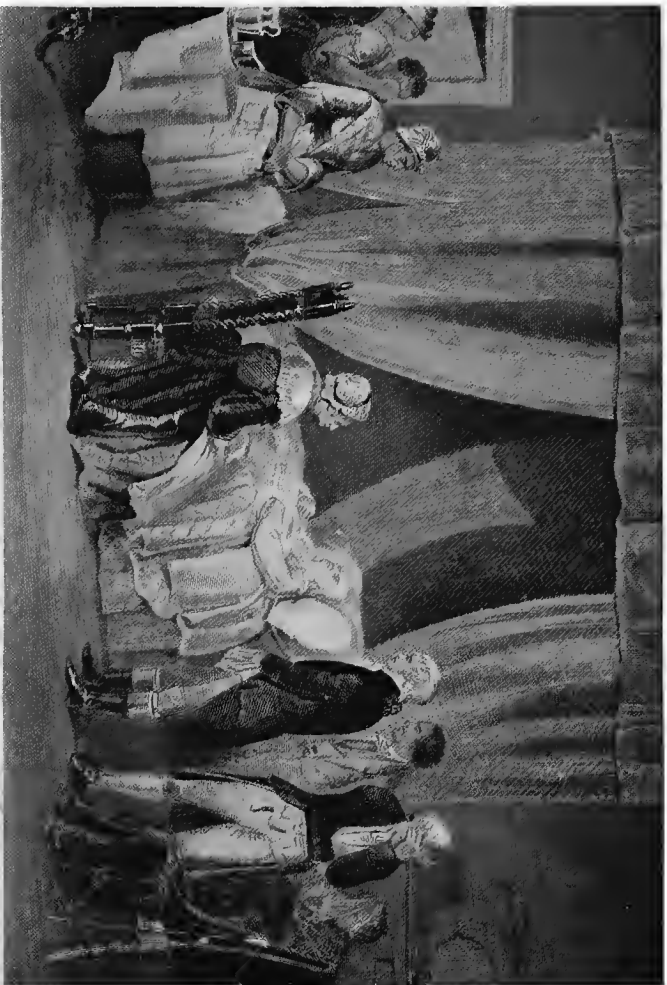
I could not speak, but held up my hand as a signal that he was no more.

"Tis well," said she in the same voice, *"All is now over. I shall soon follow him! I have no more trials to pass through!"*

Letters and Recollections of George Washington, Tobias Lear, p. 133.

The Last Sad Arrangements

At the time of his decease Dr. Craik and myself were in the situation before mentioned Mrs. Washington was



DEATH OF WASHINGTON

sitting near the foot of the bed. Christopher was standing by the bedside, Caroline, Molly & Charlotte were in the room standing near the door. Mrs. Forbes the House keeper, was frequently in the room during the day and evening.

As soon as Dr. Craik could speak after the distressing scene was closed, he desired one of the servants to ask the Gentln. below to come upstairs. When they came to the bedside; I kissed the cold hand which I had held to my bosom; laid it down, & went to the other end of the room; where I was for some time lost in profound grief; until aroused by Christopher desiring me to take care of the General's keys and other things which were taken out of his pockets; and which Mrs. Washington directed him to give to me; I wrapped them in the General's handkerchief, & took them with me to my room.

About 12 o'clk the Corpse was brought down stairs, and laid out in the large room.

Sunday Decr. 15th.

"The above statement so far as I can recollect is correct.

"JAS. CRAIK."

Sunday Decr. 15th. 1799.

Fair Weather.

Mrs. Washington sent for me in the Morning and desired I would send up to Alxa. and have a Coffin made: which I did. Doctor Dick measured the body, . . . After breakfast I gave Dr. Dick & Dr. Brown forty dollars each, which sum Dr. Craik advised as very proper; and they left us after breakfast.

I wrote letters to the following persons informing them of the late melancholy event:

The President of the United States

General Hamilton

Genl. Pinckney

Bushrod Washington

Col. W. A. Washington

Lawrence Lewis

G. W. P. Custis

Geo. S. Washington

Saml. Washington

Colo. Ball

Capt. Hammond—also to

John Lewis, desiring him to inform his Brothers, George, Robert & Howells.

Mrs. Stuart was sent for in the Morning. About 10 o'clk. Mr. Thos. Peter came down; and about two, Mr. and Mrs. Law to whom I had written on Saturday Eveng. Dr. Thornton came down with Mr. Law. Dr. Craik tarried all day & all night.

In the evening I consulted with Mr. Law, Mr. Peter & Dr. Craik on fixing a day for depositing the Body in the Vault. I wished the ceremony to be postponed until the last of the week, to give time to some of the General's relatives to be here: But Dr. Craik & Dr. Thornton gave it decidedly as their opinion that considering the disorder of which the General died, being of an inflammatory nature, it would not be proper nor perhaps safe, to keep the body so long; and therefore Wednesday was fixed upon for the funeral, to allow a day (Thursday) in case the weather should be unfavorable on Wednesday.

Letters and Recollections of George Washington, Tobias Lear, p. 136.

Preparations for the Funeral

Monday, Decr. 16th. 1799.

I directed the people to open the family Vault, clean away the rubbish from about it, and make everything decent. Ordered a door to be made to the Vault, instead of closing it again with brick, as had been the custom. Engaged Mr. Inglis and Mr. McMunn to have a Mahogany Coffin made, lined with lead, in which the body was to be deposited.

Dr. Craik, Mr. Peter, & Dr. Thornton left us after

breakfast. Mrs. Stuart & her daughters came in the afternoon. Mr. Anderson went to Alexa. to get a number of things preparatory for the funeral. Mourng. was ordered for the Family Domestics and Overseers.

Having received information from Alexa. that the Militia, Freemasons &c. were determined to show their respect to the General's Memory by attending his body to the Grave, I directed provision to be prepared for a large number of people, as some refreshment would be expected by them. Mr. Robert Hamilton wrote me a letter informing that a Schooner of his wd. be off Mount Vernon to fire Minute guns when the body was carrying to the grave.

Tuesday—Decr. 17th. 1799.

Every preparation for the mournful ceremony was making. Mr. Diggs came here in the forenoon. Also Mr. Stewart, Adjutant to the Alexa. Regimt. to view the ground for the procession.

About one o'clock the Coffin was brought from Alexa. in a stage. Mr. Inglis & Mr. McMunn accompanied it. Also Mr. Grater with a shroud. The Body was laid in the Coffin—at which time I cut off some of the hair.

The Mahogany Coffin was lined with lead, soddered at the joints—and a cover of lead to be soddered on after the body should be in the Vault. The whole was put into a case lined & covered with black Cloth.

Wednesday—Decr. 18th. 1799.

About eleven o'clk numbers of people began to assemble to attend the funeral, which was intended to have been at twelve, but as a great part of the Troop expected did not get down in time, it did not take place till three.

Eleven pieces of Artillery were brot. from Alexa. and a Schooner belonging to Mr. R. Hamilton came down & lay off Mt. Vernon to fire Minute guns.

About 3 o'clock the procession began to move. The

arrangements of the procession were made by Colonels Little, Simms & Deneale, and Dr. Dick.

When the Body arrived at the Vault the Revd. Mr. Davis read the service & pronounced a short extempore speech.

The Masons performed their ceremonies, & the Body was deposited in the Vault.

Letters and Recollections of George Washington, Tobias Lear, p. 138.

The Faithful Secretary after the Funeral

After the Ceremony the Company returned to the house where they took some refreshment, & retired in good order. The remains of the provisions were distributed among the blacks.

Mr. Peter, Dr. Craik & Dr. Thornton tarried here all night.

When the Ceremony was over I retired to my room (leaving to Mr. Law & Mr. Diggs the care of the Company) to give a loose to those feelings which I had been able to keep under control, while I found it necessary for me to give personal attention to the preparations for interring the body of my deceased friend.

What those feelings were is not to be told, if it were even possible to describe!

Monday Decr. 23d. 1799.

Employed as yesterday.

Tuesday Decr. 24th. 1799.

Spent the day in looking over & arranging papers in the General's Study.

Wednesday Decr. 25th. 1799.

I this day sent to Alexa. for the Plumber to come down & close the leaden Coffin containing the General's Body, as Judge Washington had arrived, and did not incline to see the remains. The Plumbers came. I went with them to the Tomb—I took a last look—a last farewell of that face,

which still appeared unaltered. I attended the Closing of the Coffin—and beheld for the last time that face wh. shall be seen no more here; but *wh. I hope to meet in Heaven.*

Letters and Recollections of George Washington, Tobias Lear, p. 141.

Washington's Most Vicious Enemy

The most vicious of Washington's enemies, however, was Thomas Paine, a man of noblest possible sentiments, but whose practices were so unlike his theories that had he been a church member he would have come down to posterity branded as the most villainous hypocrite that ever breathed. In his later days, which should have been his nobler ones, Paine delighted to gather his neighbors in a grove and preach to them the purest, sweetest religion of humanity, his manner and matter suggesting that of the preacher of the Sermon on the Mount; on Monday he would borrow money on which to get drunk. That he was as much in earnest in his virtues as in his vices can never be doubted; but, unfortunately, he never neglected a chance to give his vices exercise. He did so much for his country in her early hours of need, and he told so many noble truths, that it is not strange that the man who now keeps his monument in order (and without charge) is a staunch Presbyterian four score years of age; on the other hand, the results of his improvidence, dissipation, and uncurbed temper have compelled his fellow-countrymen to believe him the worst of the vilifiers of the first President.

"A man is known by the company he keeps." If men will judge Washington by his friends and admirers, they will believe better of him than any human pen can ask them to. No man has written higher praise of him than Jefferson, the nominal leader of his political enemies. All the other honored names of the revolutionary and formative period—the Adamses, the Trumbulls, the Clintons, the Lees, the Pinckneys; Benjamin Franklin, John Jay, Alexander Hamilton; the better of his generals, with noble

Greene and Schuyler at their head—all these are to be found prominent in the list of Washington's friends, and among his foreign contemporary admirers even such unlike and unsympathetic characters as Talleyrand and Napoleon were obliged to appear, while at the court of the nation from which he has wrested the best part of a continent, his personal character was of more service to his country than were the assurances of his country's envoys. Is this the sort of man to be hidden away in Fourth-of-July smoke and the mists of tradition?

George Washington, John Habberton, p. 330.

Some of His Worst Admirers

Of Washington's admirers who were also enemies, the worst, after Jefferson, was Jared Sparks, D.D., LL.D., once president of Harvard College. To this gentleman was intrusted the duty of editing Washington's writings; his method was to correct the grammar and spelling—the dear, old, delightfully inaccurate spelling—to expunge the alleged profanity (which never was profane)—to reduce the thousands of vigorous idioms to the linguistic level of a *baccalaureate* sermon, and then—oh, stupid, inexcusable Sparks!—to burn the originals! Were it not for the occasional discovery, since the death of Mr. Sparks, of letters that had escaped the envious tooth of time and the remorseless pen of the reviser, the entire world might still believe that Washington never wrote without a Latin dictionary and a “gentleman's complete letter-writer” at his elbow. If old scores can be settled by personal combat in the next world, Jared Sparks must have been a pitiable object to look at within five minutes after he entered the pearly gates, for Washington's detestation of “fine writing” was a prominent trait in his character.

Portrait painters did almost as much as Sparks to remove the real Washington from the knowledge of later generations. It is said that they were assisted by a dentist,

who made Washington a set of teeth that changed the shape of his face for the worse. This may be true, but the said teeth do not seem to have greatly troubled Gilbert Stuart, whose painting—not the countless engravings and chromos that have caricatured it—discloses fine features, a magnificent complexion, an expression of alertness yet one of composure, from all of which it is hard for a beholder to tear himself away. An inveterate "ladies' man" once said to the writer of these pages that he would travel further to look at Stuart's Washington than to see the handsomest woman in America. The best proofs of the accuracy of Stuart's picture are, that the artist himself said he wasted much time in waiting at formal sittings for Washington to look like himself, and that Stuart was obliged to make no less than twenty-six copies of it. Other portraits were painted from life, some very bad and others, notably Peale's, not so bad; the latter are not to be despised, for they catch expressions peculiar to certain strains of thought and experience. Most of those painted after the Revolutionary period, however, were taken in such quick succession—when painters were so numerous at Mount Vernon that they awaited their "turn" like so many unshaven men at a barber's shop—that the pictures have a weary, resigned, lamb-led-to-the-slaughter look which is entirely unfair to the subject.

If sculptors were not unfair to Washington as were the painters, it was only because there were fewer of them to spoil raw material. As it is still the fashion to transpose a man's face into marble or metal, it may be conceded that the sculptors of a century ago knew no better, but the best head of Washington extant looks as if its subject had been operated upon, in early youth, by some expert from the Flathead Indian tribe. Fortunately, however, most of the statues stand so high above the beholder, and have gathered so much dust, that it is difficult to realize how bad they are.

Washington's Nurses

A proper regard for the shapeliness of a book would suggest that comments upon the persons who nursed a man in his infancy should appear in the earlier chapters, instead of the later ones, and that the headquarters of a soldier should receive due mention at such times as campaigns are the subjects of narratives. There is reason in such a suggestion, as a rule, but not in the case of Washington; for neither his nurses nor his headquarters were ever heard of until long after his death.

Still, "better late than never." It is now known, on the authority of a great many persons whose stories were implicitly believed by those to whom they were first told, that in childhood's happy hour the Father of his Country was cared for by at least two thousand nurses, all colored. For how many years he enjoyed the ministrations of these faithful persons is not known, but as the cherry-tree incident occurred in his sixth year, it is unreasonable to imagine him cared for by nurses after that date. Two thousand nurses in six years gives an average of about one a day, so the amount of information and reminiscence that each dusky "mammy" brought from the Washington mansion is a lasting rebuke to those obstinate persons who persist that the colored race is deficient in power and memory. The apparent plethora of nurses in the Washington family has been accounted for, by some thinkers, on the theory that Washington's mother, being very particular, took each nurse on trial for a few hours, and had to discharge most of them as unsatisfactory; but this train of reasoning will not do, for in Virginia, a century and a half ago, nurses were bought, not hired. How it was that although Washington, nor his father, nor his mother, ever sold slaves, and although all the two thousand or more nurses survived their distinguished charge, there never were half that many persons on the combined estates of the family has not yet been

explained. It is to be hoped that mathematical science will some day reconcile the seeming discrepancy; if it does not, then so much the worse for the reputation of mathematics, for of course the statements of the nurses were entirely accurate*—the nurses themselves said so.

*In estimating the number of Washington's nurses at two thousand, the author of this volume reserves the right to modify the figures in coming editions; for although the lists seem to have been completed some years ago, influences now at work may suddenly enlarge it. The Southern negro now enjoys all the advantages of free schools and free Bibles; when the former have enabled him to read the latter and learn that some persons have lived to be a thousand years old, he may be expected to resuscitate some of Washington's nurses—now supposed to be dead—and materially extend their years.

George Washington, John Habberton, p. 324.

The Greatest Man Had There Been No Revolution

If, as Professor McMaster has said, "George Washington is an unknown man," it is because we know the heroic figure and have forgotten the sane, busy, clear-headed man portrayed in his diary. Washington, in the abstract, as taking command of the Continental army under the Cambridge elm, is an unknown man; not so the Washington viewing his white oak land on the upper Potomac, or fighting an honest land claim in the courts, or sleeping a night in his military cloak amid the great glades of the Youghiogheny. "It does not detract from Washington's true greatness," wrote Professor Adams, "for the world to know this material side of his character. On the contrary, it only exalts that heroic spirit which, in disaster, never faltered, and which, in success, would have no reward. To be sure, it brings Washington nearer the level of humanity to know that he was endowed with the passions common to men, and that he was as diligent in business as he was fervent in his devotion to country. It may seem less ideal to view Washington as a man than as a hero or statesman, but it is the duty of history to deal with great men as they actually are. Man lives for himself, as well as in and for

the State, and the distinction of individual from patriotic motives is one of the necessary tasks of historical investigation." In passing it should be noted that in all his endeavors to "open the door to the West", Washington was ever subject to the accusation of self-interest; he virtually acknowledges in a letter to Jefferson that he is looked upon as a prejudiced prophet when he affirmed that he (Washington) was glad to know that Jefferson coincided with him in the importance of the intercommunication scheme although he had no property in the West. So far as self-interest goes Washington was insistent for Potomac improvement, whereas the vast bulk of his Western property lay on the lower fifty miles of the Great Kanawha River; had he been influenced by personal motives he would have given his whole attention to the James River improvement and not the Potomac; it would have meant far more to him financially. And when both (Potomac and James) companies were established, the State of Virginia subscribed to fifty shares in both and voted them to George Washington in token of public esteem for services rendered; yet Washington refused the gift until he had found a method of acceptance that left him not one penny the richer for it.

But return to the proposition made by Professor Adams, that it not only does not lessen our esteem of Washington to know the details of his business enterprises, but indeed increases it. I submit that it has been *because* of the lack of knowledge of Washington's private ambitions and interests that Professor McMaster can say that the General and President are known to us, but "George Washington is an unknown man." What is needed to keep the personality of that truly great man distinct and vivid is a properly adjusted estimate of the "material" as well as the "heroic" elements of his character; in no case is there more urgent need of a "distinction of individual from patriotic motives" than in that of Washington; else we shall keep the "General" and "President" and lose this man most

perfectly represented in the diary of 1784 and its affiliated correspondence—the greatest man in America had there been no Revolutionary War.

Washington and the West, Archer Butler Hulbert, p. 198.

The Sublimest Figure in American History

The sublimest figure in American history is Washington on his knees at Valley Forge. He was in that hour and place the American people personified, not depending on their own courage or goodness, but asking aid from God, their Father and Preserver. Washington knew that morals are priceless, but he knew that morals are from within. And he knew that in that dread day when all, save courage, had forsaken the American arms, appeal must be to that Power beyond ourselves, eternal in the heavens, which after all, in every crisis of the lives of men and nations, has been their surest source of strength.

Men and nations go forward in their prosperous days boastfully content with their well-fed and often narrowly righteous lives. Men and nations in these fruitful periods of their existence glory in their strength and even in their goodness. But the strength is intoxication; the righteousness is conventionality. Fate, that schoolmaster of the universe, brings to such men and nations her catastrophes. And in an instant their proud tongues are still, their arrogant hearts humbled, and they learn the great truth that enduring power and peace come not from within, but from the Giver of every good and perfect gift.

George Washington knew that. That is why he made the snows of Valley Forge his altar, and on his knees asked aid from Him whom the enemy had forgotten. The enemy trusted in numbers and munitions—in infantry, cavalry, artillery. Washington trusted in these things, too; but he also trusted in the God of men and nations. And Washington won.

American Character Illustrated by Washington, in Work and Habits, Albert J. Beveridge, p. 77.

Washington the Property of All Mankind

Such was the government whose policy and whose aims were directed against our rights and liberties during the Revolutionary War. As soon as the struggle began, it was obvious that England could hold dominion over no part of the country, except what her armies occupied or wasted for the time; and that the issue of the contest turned on the question as to which would first yield,—the obstinacy of the king or the fortitude of the Americans. It was plain that George the Third would never yield except under compulsion from the other forces of the English constitution; that, as long as a corrupt House of Commons would vote supplies, he would prosecute the war, no matter what might be the expense of blood and treasure to England, no matter what might be the infliction of misery upon America. Conquest was hopeless; and Lord North, before the war was half concluded, was in favor of abandoning it. But all considerations of policy and humanity were lost upon the small mind and conscientiously malignant temper of the king. Indeed, the peculiarity of our struggle consisted in its being with an unwise ruler, who could not understand that war waged after the objects for which it was declared have utterly failed becomes mere rapine and murder; and our energy and endurance were put to the terrible test of bearing up against the king's armies, until the English nation, humbling its irritated pride, should be roused in our behalf, and break down the king's stubborn purpose. We all know, and may we never forget, that this resistance to tyrannical innovation was no fiery outbreak of popular passion, spending itself in two or three battles, and then subsiding into gloomy apathy; but a fixed and reasonable resolve, proof against corrupt and sophistical plans of reconciliation, against defeats and massacres, against universal bankruptcy and commercial ruin,—a resolve, which the sight of burning villages, and cities turned into British camps, only mad-



H. K. Brown, Sculptor

EQUESTRIAN STATUE OF WASHINGTON
Union Square, New York.

dened into fiercer persistence, and which the slow consuming fever of eight years' war, with its soul-sickening calamities and vicissitudes, could not weaken into submission. The history, so sad and so glorious, which chronicles the stern struggle in which our rights and liberties passed through the awful baptism of fire and blood, is eloquent with the deeds of many patriots, warriors, and statesmen; but these all fall into relations to one prominent and commanding figure, towering up above the whole group in unapproachable majesty, whose exalted character, warm and bright with every public and private virtue, and vital with the essential spirit of wisdom, has burst all sectional and national bounds, and made the name of Washington the property of all mankind.

Character and Characteristic Men, Edwin P. Whipple, p. 303.

Man, Soldier, Hero, Statesman

There dwelt a Man, the flower of human kind,
Whose visage mild bespoke his nobler mind.
There dwelt the Soldier, who his sword ne'er drew
But in a righteous cause, to Freedom true.
There dwelt the Hero, who ne'er killed for fame,
Yet gained more glory than a Cæsar's name.
There dwelt the Statesman, who, devoid of art,
Gave soundest counsels from an upright heart;
And, O Columbia, by thy sons caressed,
There dwelt the Father of the realms he blessed;
Who no wish felt to make his mighty praise,
Like other chiefs, the means himself to raise;
But there retiring, breathed in pure renown,
And felt a grandeur that disdained a crown.

The Home of Washington, Written by William Day on the back of a picture of Mount Vernon.

"To the memory of the Man, *first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen.*"

(Resolutions drafted by Colonel Henry [Light-horse Harry] Lee and presented to the House of Representatives, December 26, 1799.)

WORDS OF WASHINGTON

- "We should never despair."
- "Influence is not government."
- "The voice of mankind is with me."
- "The work is done, and well done."
- "Discourage vice in every shape."
- "For Heaven's sake, who are Congress?"
- "Men are very apt to run into extremes."
- "Letters of friendship require no study."
- "Speak not evil of the absent, it is unjust."
- "True friendship is a plant of slow growth."
- "Men's minds are as variant as their faces."
- "Be courteous to all, but intimate with few."
- "Peace with all the world is my sincere wish."
- "It is better to be alone than in bad company."
- "Let your hand give in proportion to your purse."
- "Those murderers of our cause—the monopolizers!"
- "I require no guard but the affections of the people."
- "True religion affords government its surest support."
- "It is our duty to make the best of our misfortunes."
- "Few men have virtue to withstand the highest bidder."
- "Commerce and industry are the best mines of a nation."
- "It is not for man to scan the wisdom of Providence."
- "Envious of none, I am determined to be pleased with all."

"A good moral character is the first essential in a man."

"I feel everything that hurts the sensibility of a gentleman."

"Time may unfold more than prudence ought to disclose."

"My policy has been to cultivate peace with all the world."

"A brother's sword has been sheathed in a brother's breast."

"I shall ever be happy to relieve the anxiety of parted friends."

"When we assumed the Soldier, we did not lay aside the Citizen."

"Unnecessary severity, and every species of insult I despise."

"Liberty, when it begins to take root, is a plant of rapid growth."

"Let us, as a nation be just; let us fulfil the public contracts."

"The Constitution is the guide which I never can abandon."

"Faithful to ourselves, we have violated no obligations to others."

"I hate deception even where the imagination only is concerned."

"The power, under the Constitution, will always be in the people."

"I do not like to add to the number of our national obligations."

"The friendship I have conceived will not be impaired by absence."

"The tumultuous populace of large cities are ever to be dreaded."

"The love of my country will be the ruling influence of my conduct."

"It is impossible to reason without arriving at a Supreme Being."

"Let your heart feel for the afflictions and distresses of every one."

"To correspond with those I love is one of my highest gratifications."

"We are now an independent people and have yet to learn political tactics."

"A wagon-load of money will scarcely purchase a wagon-load of provisions!"

"To persevere in one's duty and be silent is the best answer to calumny."

"The scene is at last closed. I feel myself eased of a load of public care."

"I hope, some day, we shall become a store-house and granary for the world."

"The company in which you will improve most will be least expensive to you."

"Resentment, reproaches and submission seem to be all that would be left to us."

"To be prepared for war is one of the most effectual means of preserving peace."

"To an active external commerce the protection of a naval force is indispensable."

"Bankruptcy will probably be made their ladder to climb to absolute authority."

"Could the poor horses tell their tale, it would be a strain still more lamentable."

"I pray devoutly that we may both witness, and that shortly, the return of peace."

"There is no restraining men's tongues or pens, when charged with a little vanity."

"Labor to keep alive in your breast that little spark of celestial fire called Conscience."

"Let us have a government by which our lives, liberties and properties shall be secured."

"I believe that man was not designed by the all-wise Creator to live for himself alone."

"I shall always strive to prove a faithful and impartial patron of genuine, vital religion."

"The man who wishes to steer clear of shelves and rocks must know where they lie."

"It is a maxim with me not to ask what, under similar circumstances, I would not grant."

"To patch up an inglorious peace, after all the toil, blood and treasure we have spent."

"Why should I expect to be exempt from censure, the unfailling lot of an elevated station."

"It is my full intention to devote my life and fortune to the cause we are engaged in, if needful."

"The welfare of the country is the great object to which our cares and efforts ought to be directed."

"Remember, officers and soldiers, that you are free-men fighting for the blessings of liberty."

"Slavery will be your portion and that of your posterity, if you do not acquit yourselves like men."

"We do not wish to be the only people to taste the sweets of an equal and good government."

"We must not despair; the game is yet in our own hands; to play it well is all we have to do."

"To the efficacy and permanency of our Union a government for the whole is indispensable."

"I can never think of promoting my convenience at the expense of a friend's interest and inclination."

"The great Ruler of events will not permit the happiness of so many millions to be destroyed."

"I shall rely confidently on that Providence which has hitherto preserved and been bountiful to me."

"Would to God the harmony of nations were an object that lay nearest to the hearts of sovereigns!"

"Let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion."

"Citizens, by birth or choice, of a common country, that country has a right to concentrate your affections."

"I hold the maxim no less applicable to public than to private affairs, that 'honesty is the best policy.' "

"That the [U. S.] Government, though not actually perfect, is one of the best in the world, I have little doubt."

"Our cause is noble. It is the cause of mankind; and the danger to it is to be apprehended from ourselves."

"No punishment, in my opinion, is too great for the man who can build his greatness upon his country's ruin."

"The once happy and peaceful plains of America are either to be drenched with blood, or inhabited by slaves."

"Nothing short of independence, it appears to me, can possibly do. A peace on other terms would be a peace of war!"

"The history of the war is a history of false hopes and temporary expedients. Would to God they were to end here!"

"Speculation, peculation, and an insatiable thirst for riches seem to have got the better of every other consideration."

"As you were pleased to leave it to my discretion to punish or pardon the criminals, I have resolved on the latter."

"Nothing is more a stranger to my breast, or a sin that my soul abhors, than that black and detestable one of *ingratitude*."

"I cannot conceive one [rank] more honorable than that which flows from the uncorrupted choice of a brave and free people."

"It appears to me that little more than common sense and common honesty would be necessary to make us a great and happy nation."

"The foundation of a great empire is laid; and I please myself with the persuasion that Providence will not leave its work imperfect."

"Here every portion of our country finds the most commanding motives for carefully guarding and preserving the Union of the whole."

"With joy I once beheld my country feeling the liveliest sense of her rights and maintaining them with a spirit apporportioned to their worth."

"I am resolved that no misrepresentations, falsehoods, or calumny shall make me swerve from what I conceive to be the strict line of duty."

"I believe there is public virtue enough left among us to deny ourselves everything but the bare necessities of life to accomplish our ends."

"It does not accord with the policy of this government to bestow offices, civil or military, upon foreigners to the exclusion of our own citizens."

"The consciousness of having attempted faithfully to discharge my duty, and the approbation of my country, will be sufficient recompense for my services."

"The very idea of the power and the right of the people to establish government presupposes the duty of every individual to obey the established government."

"It is only in our united character, as an empire, that our independence is acknowledged, that our power can be regarded, or our credit supported among foreign nations."

"The great Searcher of human hearts is my witness that I have no wish which aspires beyond the humble and happy lot of living and dying a private citizen on my own farm."

"I need not mention to you that every possible tenderness that is consistent with the security of him should be shown to the person whose unfortunate lot it may be to suffer."

"Though I prize, as I ought, the good opinion of my fellow-citizens, yet, if I know myself, I would not seek or retain popularity at the expense of one social duty or moral virtue."

"The affairs of this country cannot go amiss. There are so many watchful guardians of them (!)—and such infallible guides (!) that no one is at a loss for a director at every turn."

"Happy, thrice happy, shall they be pronounced, who have assisted in protecting the rights of human nature, and establishing an asylum for the poor and oppressed of all nations and religions."

"It appears as clear to me as ever the sun did in its meridian brightness, that America never stood in more eminent need of the wise, patriotic, and spirited exertions of her sons than at this period."

"There is not a man living who wishes more sincerely than I do to see a plan adopted for the abolition of it [slavery]. Would to God a like spirit might diffuse itself into the minds of the people of this country!"

“Avoid gaming. This is a vice which is productive of every possible evil. It has been the ruin of many a worthy family, the loss of many a man’s honor, and the cause of suicide. Few gain by this abominable practice, while thousands are injured.”

“The supplicating tears of the women, and moving petitions of the men, melt me into such deadly sorrow that I solemnly declare, if I know my own mind, I could offer myself a willing sacrifice to the butchering enemy, providing that would contribute to the people’s ease.” [From a letter written when he was 24.]

“’Tis well.” [His last words.]

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